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No. 14

N° 14

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 5 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 5 mai 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



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A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrite dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Wednesday 5 May 1993

The House met at 1331.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

BOB SECORD

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): Today, I rise to pay tribute to a man who dedicated his life to the sports community of this province.

Bob Secord spent 38 years in public service aiding athletes in their development and success. For 10 of those years, Bob served as an assistant deputy minister in the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation. While minister, I had the opportunity to work with Bob and to witness the great work he did.

Last week, Bob died of a heart attack. Ironically, he was addressing a sports volunteers' dinner at the time.

Bob was known to athletes throughout the country, as he travelled to Commonwealth and Olympic Games to show his support and offer his assistance. He was the founding chairman of the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council and a member of the Canadian Olympic Association.

For many years, Bob was the driving force behind the ministry's annual sports awards dinner, in which provincial and national champions are brought together by the government to acknowledge their hard work, determination and success.

For these athletes, hard work is not enough. They must have the support of their community, both financial and moral, to continue in the daily grind of the pursuit of excellence. Bob Secord was one of those supporters. He was known by hundreds of athletes around this province for the key role he played in aiding their efforts.

On behalf of my party and I know all parties here in the Legislature, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Bob Secord, a man who devoted his life and his heart to Ontario's athletes.

GO RAIL EXPANSION

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): GO Transit has completed the environmental study for its proposed GO rail expansion program, Richmond Hill corridor. The intent is to build a second track and increase the existing service from eight trains per day up to 34 trains per day.

The final day of public review of the class environmental assessment document was April 28. Requests of the Minister of the Environment requiring this project to undergo an individual environmental assessment had to be received by that date.

My constituents have presented a petition to the

Environment minister, written dozens of letters and have been in constant contact with my office in an attempt to make their concerns heard. To date, no one has received any indication from the government that their complaints have been received. This includes my letter of March 28 requesting an individual environmental assessment on behalf of my constituents.

The original environmental assessment did not properly consult the community on the proposed changes. Hundreds of individuals who live in the neighbourhood were not informed of the original process. In addition, there are concerns that the scope of the original process was too narrow and did not take into consideration the impact of the expansion on the community.

My constituents and I expect to see positive action taken by the government in order to guarantee that my community is properly consulted and their concerns resolved through an individual environmental assessment. Please, Minister, we would like you to answer your mail.

CANCER TREATMENT CENTRE

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I rise today to speak in support of the Citizens for a Cancer Centre, a group of concerned citizens who wish to draw to the attention of the public the urgent need for an additional cancer treatment centre in eastern Ontario.

Cancer patients requiring radiation treatment must travel long distances to radiation centres in Toronto or east to Kingston. Not only is the distance tiring under normal circumstances, but with the stresses of undergoing debilitating treatments for serious illnesses, the trip can present a real threat to the wellbeing of patients. The cost to the patients and their families is devastating.

Recently, it came to light that patients requiring radiation treatment for breast cancer in Toronto face a three- to four-month wait. At this time in a patient's life, when they're particularly vulnerable, this extended wait can be intolerable.

A constituent of mine recently had to travel to Thunder Bay for a two-and-one-half-minute daily treatments for a period of five weeks. The cost of hotels and meals was \$5,000. That \$5,000 could have been spent to offer services to her in her community.

Services in cancer detection, investigation and treatment are currently offered at the Oshawa General Hospital, and that hospital currently serves a population of some 600,000 people in the area stretching from Metro Toronto to Trenton and north to Haliburton. However, all treatments involving radiation therapy either must be sent to other centres, overloading their

facilities, or involve intolerable waiting.

Regardless of the location, either the Oshawa General Hospital or elsewhere, the numbers in terms of patients and interests of the community demand the serious and immediate consideration of the Ministry of Health.

COMMUNITY RECREATION FUNDING

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I would like to inform the members of the House of a recreation project in my community which is anxiously awaiting the announcement of capital grant funding from the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation.

The Long Sault Centennial Arena in Cornwall township serves the recreation needs of residents in Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and the eastern counties. However, if provincial funding is not committed to constructing the new facilities in the very near future, all organized recreation programs may have to be cancelled come September. The Ministry of Labour is firm in its decision and threat to shut down the existing arena if the repairs are not made.

The Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation will know that the township has all its funding in place. However, its application is on hold pending notification that the funds will be available for the 1993 capital grant program.

Two weeks ago, I brought the matter up with the Minister of Finance, but I still have no concrete information to give the concerned citizens in the area. I ask that the Minister of Finance very quickly consider allocating either Jobs Ontario or economic development money to the eastern regional tourism office so that this top priority project can go ahead.

DOUG WOODHOUSE

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): I rise in the House today to pay special tribute to a constituent, Doug Woodhouse. Doug is a grade 12 student at Parry Sound High School who's been selected to receive the 1993 Roberta Bondar Science and Technology Student Award. This is an annual award granted by the province in recognition of outstanding effort and achievement in the area of science and technology. Unfortunately, my legislative duties prevented me from attending the awards ceremony, which is being held as I speak.

Doug is an exemplary student who's very highly regarded by staff and students at Parry Sound High School. He possesses an outstanding academic record, with a particular affinity for maths and sciences.

Doug's commitment to education does not end there, however. He's the chief organizer and chairperson of the Drug and Alcohol Awareness Committee in Parry Sound. As such, he visits with elementary schools in our community in order to warn younger students about the perils of drug and alcohol abuse. It was Doug who also organized and conducted a computer workshop for teachers of Parry Sound High School when new com-

puter technology was introduced to the school.

Good players make good coaches, and I would be remiss if I did not commend Dr and Mrs Woodhouse for their encouragement and support both of Doug and his sister, Nathalie.

I am certain that we can all appreciate the hard work and dedication involved on Doug's behalf to be a recipient of this prestigious award. On behalf of the people of Parry Sound riding, I am delighted to have the opportunity to congratulate Doug on this outstanding accomplishment.

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TREE-PLANTING CEREMONIES

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): In 1977, the Rockton Lions Club conducted a tree-planting ceremony at the Beverly Community Centre in recognition of the service rendered to the community by two of the club's deceased members, Hugh R. Hunter and John W. Howell. Other residents heard of the memorial tree planting initiatives and wanted to join in. Approximately 50 trees were planted that year.

The idea of a memorial tree planting ceremony caught on and has been repeated over the years. Other Lions Club members have been recognized, most of whom I have known for many years: Frank Dowling, Blake Dymont, Garnet Pearl and long-time fishing friend Cliff Morden.

Recently more members were recognized: Keith Canham, David Emberson, Harry Fielding, Lyle Hunter, Ross McLean, Ray Patterson and Don Sumner.

At the same time, five more memorial trees were planted in memory of other area residents. They are Eldon Basset, Fanny Cooper, Harry Elkin, Murray McKnight and Cyril Woods.

Over the years a beautiful grove has emerged, a quiet testimonial to Lions Club members and area residents who have all served their community well.

HEALTH SERVICES IN OTTAWA-CARLETON

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): The Ottawa-Carleton Liberal caucus wishes to draw to the attention of the House, and especially the Minister of Health, a serious problem with paramedic services delivered in the Ottawa-Carleton area.

According to Dr Justin Maloney, an emergency physician at the Ottawa General Hospital, the Ottawa-Carleton region has one of the lowest survival rates in North America for resuscitation when a patient's heart stops.

Apparently, this problem exists in Ottawa-Carleton because paramedics are only required to have one advanced skill, whereas paramedics in other jurisdictions have additional skills for coping with such life-threatening emergencies.

In medical emergencies, gaps in training and a

response delay of mere minutes can mean the difference between life and death. Ottawa-Carleton urgently needs improved paramedical service.

I beg this government to honour its original commitment as quickly as possible. The Minister of Health must upgrade the skill levels of paramedics in Ottawa to bring them up to par with paramedics in other, safer cities like Toronto and Hamilton.

It is believed that 30 to 40 people die unnecessarily each year in the Ottawa-Carleton area. Surely the government must understand that these people need not perish in a modern society that possesses the skills and equipment to save their lives.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): My statement is for the Minister of Finance, who claims to be saving taxpayers' money by cutting waste and jobs. I would suggest that you don't have to look too far to find a great deal of waste in the form of a bloated civil service.

The former Liberal government converted many members of the press gallery into executive assistants or high-priced public relations agents and increased their average salary from \$42,000 to \$62,000.

That same government imposed 32 tax hikes on the people of Ontario over five years and increased the debt to \$10 billion. Minister, your NDP government increased the salaries of executive assistants from \$62,000, my understanding is, to \$84,000, and created positions for four parliamentary assistants per minister where there was once only one.

Your government has increased civil service salaries 5.7% and created baby ministers who do not respond to questions and cannot attend cabinet meetings but cost the taxpayers approximately \$400,000 each. And it is my understanding that your government has kept two deputy ministers on the payroll who are not actually doing any work.

Minister, while you claim you will trim 11,000 jobs from the bloated civil service, the Attorney General's department is converting 1,100 freelance or fee-for-service court reporters, court interpreters, clerks, bailiffs and small claims court employees into unionized, salaried civil servants.

Minister, your government told the people of Ontario it would spend its way out of the recession and create jobs. Now you're axing jobs and hitting us with higher taxes. Your misguided policies or programs are putting Ontario taxpayers and jobs on the endangered species list.

LENA JAMES

Mrs Ellen MacKinnon (Lambton): As Mother's Day approaches, I would like to pay tribute to the late Lena James, mother of Sarnia-Lambton MP Ken James.

Mrs James lived her entire life in Lambton county,

and with her husband of over 40 years worked in the family Holstein business producing the highest quality of Friesian Holstein cows. The Jameses earned many provincial and Canadian awards for their Holsteins.

Mrs James was a member of the Blackwell United Church for over 50 years and the Blackwell Women's Institute for over 30 years. Many will remember Mrs James for her readings in period costume and the plays she performed in throughout Lambton county. In recent years Mrs James was active in the North Sarnia Retirement Club, the Clearwater Seniors and the YW-YMCA, and she never, ever lost her enthusiasm for travelling with her son Ken when he was performing his constituency duties.

Surviving Mrs James are her two sons, Ken and Bruce, six grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. I extend my sympathy to the entire family as Lena James will be missed by all who knew her.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN HOUSE

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Before beginning oral questions—

Interjection: Petitions.

The Speaker: It's not time for petitions.

It has been drawn to my attention that yesterday a cellular telephone rang in this chamber during the debate. The disturbance caused by the telephone in this instance and previously by such devices as pagers and portable computers does not afford a member who has the floor with the courtesy and respect that is deserved.

I want to take this opportunity to remind all members that the use of any electronic devices not sanctioned for use in this chamber is not permitted and ask that all members refrain from bringing such devices into the chamber.

It is time for oral questions and the member for Oriole.

ORAL QUESTIONS

LABOUR RELATIONS

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): My question is to the Chair of Management Board, in the absence of the Premier and the Treasurer. Yesterday Ontario's public sector unions flatly rejected your social contract proposals to cut \$2 billion out of the public payroll. They unanimously rejected wage freezes and rollbacks and have demanded that your government raise taxes instead to trim the deficit. By their own admission, Ontario's public sector unions are, and I quote, "on a major collision course" with your government. How much longer are you going to wait before you will admit that these negotiations are just not working?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): In respect to the member's question in terms of when we're going to admit failure, the member obviously doesn't understand the negotiating process very well at all. Negotiation, and specifically

the negotiation of this social contract, the Premier, the Minister of Finance and others have said clearly from the beginning is going to be a difficult process. It is not a normal process.

Having said that, we have said clearly from the outset that from our perspective, being able to sit down with the partners and attempt to deal in as fair a way as we can with the questions of protecting jobs and protecting services in this province is important to us and we're prepared to stick with that process to attempt to see that our fiscal circumstances are dealt with in a way that's quite different from what has been done in any other province in this country.

Mrs Caplan: I say to the Chairman of Management Board and to this government, you brought this mess on yourselves. You have done nothing but mismanage the province's affairs since taking office. Now, just days before the provincial budget, the chaos and the confusion that you've created by your mishandling of this issue has put you into unnecessary confrontation with the province's unions.

Yesterday your chief negotiator, Michael Decter, clearly indicated that time is running out. He will be making recommendations for a deadline for negotiations. You've waited until very late in the day to get the negotiating process under way. Time is running out. I ask the Chairman of Management Board, how do you intend to proceed if the unions refuse to participate?

Hon Mr Charlton: I repeat, the Liberal administrations in other provinces, Conservative administrations in other provinces, have taken the legislative route as their first choice and first option. The member opposite refers to some appearance of confrontation. I can assure the member that if we had done as Liberal and Conservative administrations in other provinces have done and proceeded with legislation in the first instance, that confrontation would have been there.

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Our commitment is to attempt and to continue to attempt to deal in as sensitive and open a way with the partners, both employers and employees, in the public sector and broader public sector as we can. We will continue to attempt to sit at the table with those partners and discuss the issues around the protection of jobs and the protection of services in this province because we see that as a very fundamental part of what this government believes this province should look like.

Mrs Caplan: Minister, your government created this mess in the first place with its generous wage agreement with its own employees in the fall of 1990. Now you've intruded in the collective bargaining process in a way which is unheard of in this province in an attempt to claw back some of that money.

We've been telling you all along that we are very concerned about this process. Now you are headed to

unnecessary showdown with the 900,000 public sector workers and their unions, and, Minister, they don't even work for you. They work for the schools, the hospitals, the municipalities and social service agencies right across this province.

We believe a better approach would have been to negotiate in good faith with your own employees, the 90,000 OPS workers, and to use that agreement as a model to be followed for the broader public sector employers in the hospitals, the municipalities and the school boards.

Minister, you've missed an opportunity but it isn't too late. Won't you admit that you can't run everything out of your Premier's office, and isn't it a better solution to urgently negotiate an agreement with your own employees which could be used as a model for the broader public sector?

Hon Mr Charlton: Again I must conclude from the preamble and the member's question that she doesn't understand the process of collective bargaining. As I've said twice now in this House, and as the Premier has said, and as the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Finance have said repeatedly, there are a number of sensitivities around the protection of jobs and protection of services that have to be addressed in this social contract negotiation. There is only one place that those sensitivities can be appropriately addressed and that's at the negotiating table with those partners, and we are determined to ensure that that process goes forward.

GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Minister of Labour. Minister, when my leader asked me if I would take on the role of being the Labour critic, I did some research into a number of the—

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): That's it?

Mr Mahoney: Just fix the roads.

I did some research into a number of the issues that you've been dealing with and have been questioned on. The Workers' Compensation Board, Minister—and the question was raised in the House to the Premier, at which time he threw numbers around to try to confuse the whole issue—is currently building a new building worth some \$200 million. They've entered into a development partnership agreement with Cadillac Fairview and the Toronto Dominion Bank in which they will build this new edifice and then lease back 75% of the space, representing in excess of 500,000 square feet.

Minister, as Minister of Labour, could you tell me and the people whom you consider to be your partners sitting at this social contract table how you can on one hand talk to them about sacrificing, about taking pay cuts, about doing everything that needs to be done, and on the other hand sit there and approve of this new

edifice that the Workers' Compensation Board is moving into?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): I think it should be pointed out, and I'm sure the member across the way realizes it, that the lease on the current headquarters of the WCB is up in 1995, and there were discussions back as early as 1987 as to what might be the replacement or the new location or new headquarters for the board.

There were also, as I'm sure the member is well aware of, an awful lot of complaints about the number of people jammed into that building, the problems with the elevators, the problem that there was no access for handicapped or injured people to speak of and that the process put in place some six years ago by previous governments was well under way when this government took office, and we have, since that time, proceeded with recommendations coming from the board.

Mr Mahoney: The minister is correct when he says there were discussions that were ongoing, no question about that, but there was not a deal done, sir, there was not a contract signed, there were not financing agreements entered into by the WCB and there sure as heck was not a lease signed.

How do you justify one of your government agencies signing a 20-year lease at a cost of \$264 million over the terms of that lease, at a cost of \$13,240 million per year, at a cost of \$1.1 million per month? How in God's name, sir, can you stand there and defend that decision when you have to sit there—and let me tell you they won't be worried about their working conditions, because under what you're doing, they won't even have jobs.

My question to you, Minister—as the Minister of Labour, you partake in the social contract negotiations and you sit by and idly do nothing about the WCB entering into development agreements, entering into long-term financial commitments—how do you justify that to your so-called partners?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: One of the very first briefings I had as a new Minister of Labour was with Mr Wilson and Mr Elgie, who outlined the process they'd gone through and outlined the benefits of the deal they were suggesting to us. I haven't yet been shown where the deal they've entered into is a bad deal.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): At \$20 a square foot? The marketplace is \$1 a square foot.

Mr Mahoney: Excuse me, I'll ask the question. You can come in later.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. The member for Mississauga West has the floor.

Mr Mahoney: To the Minister of Labour, you wouldn't understand the difference. When you've got millions of square feet of office space sitting empty in the Toronto downtown core, you might not understand

that it's a bad deal to commit for 20 years to \$25.22 a square foot when in fact you could without a problem—I could introduce you to several real estate agents who'd love the commission at \$5 a square foot to set up the WCB in very convenient facilities.

As a matter of fact, there are people who own buildings in the city of Toronto who would be delighted to have the WCB as a tenant and give you five years rent free, Minister, and you don't understand, sir, why you couldn't get a better deal or how this can be justified. The fact of the matter is that your credibility is just totally destroyed on this issue. On the one hand you are preaching a policy of restraint and on the other hand you are allowing the WCB to move into this—

The Speaker: Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Mahoney: They're going to take 22 floors of a beautiful glass edifice for workers' compensation. Why don't you do your job and fight for the workers instead of building empires for the Workers' Compensation Board?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: Whether it was the best deal in the world or not at this point in time I can't tell you. I can tell you that the arrangements they have there are a heck of a lot better deal than we got into with SkyDome, for example, from previous governments. I want to also tell you that the WCB is investing its money in this, through a separate entity, as an investment. That is good business as well and the member should know that.

EDUCATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): One of my questions is for the Treasurer, who I understand may be here, so I will go on with the second question that I have to the Minister of Education. Minister, last fall my caucus released *New Directions*, Volume Two, a comprehensive plan for improving education and training in the province. I know you're aware of it because you were carrying it with you every day—

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): It was taken out of my briefing book.

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Mr Harris: They took it out of your briefing book yesterday, I understand. You must have it memorized by now, Minister.

We discovered, through actually a year of research, of interviews, of consulting across the province, that many of our students are not prepared for employment opportunities. Twenty-seven per cent of high school students drop out. Of those who graduate, 25% are functionally illiterate or lack the basic math skills required for additional education or for their future jobs and entering the workplace.

Minister, given that background and that information, which is now pretty common knowledge, I think we've

got a problem, and you've acknowledged that. That is why I was shocked this morning to read in the Toronto Sun that teachers at Humberside Collegiate are being urged to pass failing grade 9 students.

Minister, I would ask you this: Do you not realize that this is exactly the kind of attitude that parents, that employers, that taxpayers and the public are saying they're fed up with in education? There are no standards. If there are, you don't stick to them, you can't measure them, and even if somebody does set one, you ignore it and you pass them anyway. Minister, how can this possibly be happening in any school in the province of Ontario, given the concerns that are being expressed, even by yourself? How can this be allowed to happen?

Hon Mr Cooke: I read the same article in the newspaper this morning. I have asked the ministry to help me understand exactly what the decision at the school was and to get some information. I've learned over the years not to always believe exactly what you read, but in general I certainly agree with some of the concerns that the member has expressed.

I also think it's important to put it in some perspective. The education system is not a complete failure in the province of Ontario. There are a lot of committed teachers, there are a lot of committed school boards and excellence in the education system, but there is a lot of work that needs to be done as well. To just trash the entire education system and say that the whole thing is a failure, I think, does a disservice to 142,000 teachers in this province but also to a lot of committed parents who work in the system as well.

What we need to do instead is look at some positive measures. We need to look at testing the system, as I've indicated this government supports, so that we can have a rational discussion about how successful the education system is, where the weaknesses are, and then take the appropriate action with curriculum and teaching methods to make the system even better than it is today.

Mr Harris: Minister, you've got this royal commission; it's going to take a year and a half to report; it can't look at a whole bunch of things that we think are important to look at. But right now, right in front of you, let me quote from the memo that was given to Humberside Collegiate teachers, because you say you can't always believe what you read in the papers. Let's use a direct quote, and I assume the paper got that right.

It said, "Such students will find it difficult to complete the 30 credits for their diploma." This memo adds, "It would be helpful if we could give as many as possible a boost over the 50% to have them go on with a grade 9 credit." In other words, we want those students and their parents to say, "Here, they have the grade 9 credit," even though they do not have the knowledge or the ability or they have not passed the grade 9 credit. Will you put an immediate stop to this in every school in our province today so we can start to

get back on track in this province?

Hon Mr Cooke: It doesn't seem to matter what the leader of the third party is talking about, whether it's education, whether it's the deficit; whatever the issue is, there's always a simple answer. Everything is black and white. That's not how the world operates. That's not how the education system operates.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Look who's talking.

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): How dare you say that.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Cooke: What I want to do is take a look at the strengths and the weaknesses of the system. I'm prepared, and have already announced, more accountability measures being introduced to the education system under this government than ever were contemplated by any Tory education minister. If we've got a problem in the education system, I would just point out that it was shepherded by a Tory government for 42 years.

Mr Harris: Minister, the education system is not a complete disaster, but there are problems. You know there are problems, I know there are problems. You can go back, if you want, 100 years and talk about the problems then, but I'm telling you what's happening today and I'm asking you to put a stop to it.

Recently, Minister, at a policy conference in southwestern Ontario, the following resolution was voted on: "That a rigorous provincial core curriculum of basic academic subjects be there in high school, that testing student progress against recognized international standards of excellence be there, and that issuing diplomas only to those students whose work meets or exceeds standards...."

That carried by 94%—that was a party policy conference; we invited all of London and southwestern Ontario, including some people from Windsor, Mr Minister—and I suggest to you that 94% is pretty reflective of the public of this province. They know what's wrong, they've been telling you what's wrong, and yet here we have another "Direction to the Teachers."

The Speaker: The question, please.

Mr Harris: "Unless failure is essential," he said, "30 to 40 grade 9 students who fail this year will be promoted to grade 10 with their more successful classmates."

Minister, will you put a stop to this today? It is quite simple, this part of it, given my concern because I've got two young boys—

The Speaker: Would the leader complete his question, please.

Mr Harris: —going into the system. Parents are

concerned; employers are concerned. Do you agree with this, and if you do not, will you stop it today?

Hon Mr Cooke: Well, Mr Speaker, I'm certainly glad the leader of the third party said that there were just a few Tories from Windsor who were at the south-western Ontario conference, because you could take all of the active ones and put them in a mini-van and that would be it.

I've told the leader of the third party—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Minister.

Hon Mr Cooke: I'm glad that it was a Chrysler mini-van built in Windsor.

All I want to say to the leader of the third party is that I agree with some of the concerns that he has expressed, and other people in our province. We announced some accountability measures and province-wide testing of grade 9 students, and we're determined to look at the strengths and the weaknesses of the system and take appropriate action to correct it. But we're not going to do that by trashing the entire education system. We need to work with parents and teachers and trustees and the general public, to work together to find solutions.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Harris: Mr Speaker, I'm told the Treasurer will be here at 2:30, so I can ask somebody who has some authority on these social contracts. I'll stand it down, if I can, until that time.

The Speaker: The member for York North.

AMALGAMATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

Mr Charles Beer (York North): My question is to the Minister of Education and it has to do with school boards.

Minister, does your government support the following recommendation made in the 1985 report of the Commission on the Financing of Elementary and Secondary Education in Ontario, known as the Macdonald commission report: "That there be in Windsor/Essex, London/Middlesex, Hamilton/Wentworth and Ottawa/Carleton one board of education and one Roman Catholic separate school board to serve each respective area"?

Further, Minister, have you appointed Ontario's former agent general to Britain and former Education minister, Tom Wells, to bring about these amalgamations, starting with Windsor-Essex?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): The answer to the first question is that the government hasn't taken a formal position, and the answer to the second question is no.

Mr Beer: Yesterday you announced the royal commission on education, and it was clear in announcing that commission that there were several major areas

that were not being covered. One was the financing of the system; the other was to do with amalgamation of school boards.

1410

You have already spoken in different places in the province that you are going to create task forces or a special commission to look at that. Can you tell us today, Minister, whether it is still your intention to deal with a variety of school boards where you wish to bring about amalgamation, what process you're going to put in place, what time frame you have in mind, because there is out there, especially in the Ottawa-Carleton, Windsor-Essex areas, the belief that you are going to begin that process on Monday in a speech to the Windsor Rotary Club. It would seem to me, Minister, if you're going to be moving on this, that the place where you must speak first is here in this Legislature, as I asked you to do on the funding of the system.

So my question, Minister, is: Are you going to be moving to bring about these amalgamations in some form or other? What is the time frame, what is the process and will you make a commitment that if you are going to move in that way, you will speak here first?

Hon Mr Cooke: What I would say to the member is that I've indicated several times across the province that I think we need to take a look at the number of school boards that we have in the province, we need to take a look at how much money is being spent in the classroom versus how much money is being spent in administration and in school boards and that we need to put more money into the classrooms instead of in structures across the province.

I think we need to work with individual communities to get at the facts of how much money can be saved by having fewer school boards in some areas of the province. Final decisions haven't been made as to what the process will be, but I think it's important that the communities be involved in determining their own destiny.

GAMBLING

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Minister, in the most recent issue of your ministry's casino update, a ministry official says that the Windsor police department will be compensated for the costs associated with increased crime as a result of the Windsor casino being in operation. Could you tell us what the projected increase in the rate of crime will be and how much it's going to cost?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): I think it's fair to say that when you establish any large facility in any location which draws crowds of people, there are concerns around increased crime.

One of the concerns that was first raised by the law

enforcement community of Windsor, in Ontario in general and in the community itself, of course, was that they wanted to be assured that some of the proceeds from the casino revenue would go to help pay for further police enforcement.

We don't have any projection at this point of the total amount that will be. However, we are working quite closely with the law enforcement agencies and we'll work something out with them over time.

Mr Eves: To the minister: Surely the minister knows that in January the Windsor Police Services Board completed its analysis of the impact the casino would have on criminal activity in the Windsor area as a result of the casino being there.

How come you haven't tabled that report in the House? Why haven't you made it public? Are you aware of the fact that when Atlantic City legalized casinos, the increase in the crime rate was 171% over the first four years that they were in operation? It's happened everywhere that there's been casino gambling in the world. Why do you want to inflict this on the people of Windsor and why won't you table the report?

Hon Ms Churley: I think it's probably not reasonable to compare Atlantic City with Windsor. The whole process in Atlantic City was to set up row after row of casinos and create a bit of a casino village there. The whole idea was to get people in there and keep them in there. That is not the concept for the one casino in Windsor. There's no comparison whatsoever.

What law enforcers told us is that one of the mistakes that was made in places like Atlantic City and others is that they didn't consult with the law enforcement community up front and work together to make sure that a very strong regulatory enforcement regime was in place up front. That is what we have done very carefully here in Ontario.

WATER SUPPLY

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): My question is to the Minister of Environment and Energy. Before I ask the question I would like to compliment the previous Minister of the Environment for a commitment in my community in trying to get water to them.

Minister, recently the community-led attempt to pump fresh water from the northern part of Kent county was turned down at the last moment by one of the partners. This area of my riding has serious problems now in the insecure supply of drinking water. The affected municipalities, including the town of Dresden, Canning township and Chatham township, have passed resolutions requesting assistance from your ministry to fund a feasibility study for an alternative source of drinking water. Is your ministry willing to react quickly to this request like the previous minister reacted quickly?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I know that the previous minister was

committed to a proper water supply for the area, and I appreciate the member's interest in this matter. I am aware that the town of Wallaceburg, despite the substantial financial commitment that the province was prepared to make, has rejected the project and that this has meant termination of the particular project.

My ministry has received representations from the member and from Chatham township, the town of Dresden, Sombra township and Camden township asking us to fund a feasibility study for consideration of alternative ways to provide a secure water supply, and we're prepared to undertake a study to determine how we can do this while alternative water sources would be available to the municipalities wishing to participate, and I'm ready to proceed to cabinet with the proposal for our new project.

Mr Hope: We started off this project at \$22 million under the Liberal government, and it escalated in price because the Liberals sat back. My biggest concern is, can the minister please explain to us further steps that we in the municipality can take to ensure that the water supply gets to these affected municipalities quickly.

Hon Mr Wildman: Frankly, I think the municipalities have made their position very clear. We're meeting this week with the engineering consultants for this water supply project. We understand that the consultants can proceed immediately with the feasibility study that will then have to go through the class environmental assessment process. But we're willing to work expeditiously with the participating municipalities to ensure that a proposed water supply project can be brought forward for cabinet's consideration.

SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): My question is to the Minister of Health, if I can get her attention here for a moment. Madam Minister, when Bill 101, the long-term care bill, was introduced in November 1992, there was a provision to allow for direct funding to disabled persons. It was also announced that a pilot project would be implemented to this end. Almost six months later we have heard nothing about the pilot project promised. Madam Minister, tell me, when will the pilot project begin, where will it take place and how much will be allocated to this project?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Let me assure the member that certainly the pilot project is a very real priority for us. It was included, as I'm sure he knows, not only in Bill 101 but in the framework for long-term care that I released last month. Just last Monday, Bill 101 received final approval in this Legislature, and I hope now to be able to move forward and provide the detailed information that he's seeking.

Mr Curling: The disabled community has been pleading with the government to allow them to take their own aides to assist in such personal tasks as bathing and dressing. These people, as you know, have

waited long enough, and they deserve that right. What do I say, Madam Minister, to the disabled community today about the further delay? I know you said tomorrow as the earliest for bringing it forward; it may be possibly months. When it comes forward, then I will be convinced. It may be perhaps years until this government finally allows disabled persons the dignity and respect they deserve.

I'd like to ask, while I'm on my feet, Madam Minister, the seniors community is wondering whether or not it will receive the same services as the disabled people.

Hon Mrs Grier: I can't respond to the final portion of the member's question until the pilot project to which he referred has been completed and we have the results of that. But in response to his question as to what he says to the disabled community about delay in this pilot project, let me say to him that I hope he will say to the disabled community that after 10 years of talking about long-term care, we now have a government that in the face of very real fiscal constraint is making decisions that allow us to retain our priorities, and that long-term care and the disabled community is indeed one of those priorities.

1420

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): The Minister of Labour knows that many employers remain concerned that the Workers' Compensation Board does not have the legal authority to extend WCB coverage to training participants, training that's going to cost the government at least \$1.5 million—a cost, I might add, which is ridiculously low, because other people anticipate it's going to cost the government \$8 million to \$12 million. However, for some time this government has indicated that it's not willing to release the legal opinion which the board is using to justify the expansion of the WCB's mandate.

Minister, would you explain why the WCB is refusing to release the legal opinion which provides the justification for its policy of providing workers' compensation coverage for training participants? Will you also tell us why you have personally not taken steps to persuade the board to release this document, a document which it originally indicated it would release to the public?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): What we decided was that we had a major retraining program going in the province of Ontario. We were running into problems in terms of who would pay the costs for some of the trainees, and we made the decision that the government would take that initiative and pay it itself, rather than charging back the various levels of employers.

Mrs Witmer: It's fine to say that the government's going to pay the cost, but I think we have to realize that

it's the taxpayers in this province who are going to pay the cost, and we'd certainly like to know what the decision was based on.

However, continuing with the secrecy at the WCB: I understand that you are preparing to release a comprehensive paper on occupational diseases. As I'm sure you can appreciate, the prospect of the Workers' Compensation Board significantly expanding the scope of its coverage at this time, in this province, is of great concern to employers. Will you tell us when you intend to release the paper on occupational diseases? Can you also tell us what plans are there to allow for complete and full public consultation and discussion on this paper?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: We are in the process currently of taking a look at the study on industrial disease, and as soon as we have absorbed that study, we will be making it available to the public.

SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, three years ago the government approved construction of a new \$5.6-million facility for the Rotary Children's Centre, a centre which provides care for 1,200 children with disabilities, children from the Waterloo region and the Wellington county area. The government promised more than \$4 million towards the cost. I can tell you, Minister, a land swap was arranged and more than \$900,000 has been pledged by our community towards the cost.

But now the project is at a standstill, and the future care of these children is at stake. It is not a good investment to do major renovations in the old facility to improve problems of fire safety and maintenance. But if the new facility keeps being stalled, the children may be at risk.

The Rotary Centre wants the ministry to take action. The children need a safe and secure environment. My question to the minister is, when will the funding for this vital project be approved?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm well aware of the interest and the support that the member for Cambridge has shown in the Rotary Centre, both in his discussions with the ministry, with my predecessor and with myself.

But I have to say to him that I can't give him a date today. What I can say to him is that the review of capital facilities that was undertaken by my predecessor is, I think, almost completed, and that knowing of both the support of the member and the widespread support and contribution of the Cambridge community, I will endeavour to get that answer to him as quickly as I can.

Mr Farnan: Minister, I must appeal to you on behalf of these children, these 1,200 children with disabilities, children in my community and surrounding areas who need a very important service.

I know the minister is extraordinarily busy and her portfolio covers a huge range of issues. I appreciate the minister's sensitivity and I appreciate the minister's knowledge of the issue. But, Minister, I have to remind you that this community not only has given financial commitment, but it has waited for over a year for a review to take place so that the project can move forward.

Minister, I appeal to you, please don't let this review take too long. Please give us an answer and please address the needs of these 1,200 children.

Hon Mrs Grier: I sympathize most sincerely with the sense of urgency that I know the member and these families and the people of the community have. Let me say to him that the reason it has taken a long time to undertake this review is not because of other issues, but merely because of the complexity of reviewing the capital funding for not just this project but a number of similar projects and, at the same time, reviewing the implications for operating funding over the long term, because it is only prudent to evaluate the effects of both the capital and the operating and the requirements that we will have so that we can give assurance and security when the final decisions are made.

Let me say again that I will undertake to get those answers to him just as quickly as I can.

DAIRY INSPECTION

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Again, it's an issue that affects every resident of the province of Ontario.

The minister noted that there was duplication in his ministry's system of dairy inspectors. The Minister of Agriculture and Food announced last week that he would be terminating the jobs of several inspectors. In fact, the minister said that the number of inspectors would be reduced from 35 to 23. However, I've heard very strong suggestions that the actual reduction may be more like 35 to 10. Specifically, it has been identified that there will be five inspectors in western Ontario, one plant inspector and three field workers in eastern Ontario and one inspector on double duty in northern Ontario.

Mr Minister, what is the true and final number of layoffs and where will each of the remaining inspectors be located?

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I appreciate the member for Cornwall's interest in food safety, particularly in the safety and high quality of milk that we have in this province.

I don't have the actual details of the location of every inspector and where they're going to be in the province at my fingertips. If the member for Cornwall would like to know exactly where the inspectors are going to be across the province, I'd be very pleased to provide him

with that material in writing. I don't have it with me here today.

Mr Cleary: My supplementary: The minister assured Ontarians that milk quality will not be affected by his cutbacks and the slack may be picked up in other ways. Specifically, the minister said, "There are other inspectors who are accountable to the milk marketing board and others." I find this a very vague assurance and very discomfoting.

The people of Ontario have every right to know exactly who the known inspectors are and what their expertise is. I also ask, can anyone, other than a government employee, legally implement Milk Act regulations?

Hon Mr Buchanan: I again want to reassure the member that there's no diminished capacity here for inspection in terms of quality and safety. The member needs to be reassured that there will not be as many inspections at the farm as have been conducted in the past. There will be the same numbers of inspections and testing at the plant. On-farm visits will be conducted as necessary to ensure that the safety and high standards are maintained.

We all know that milk is a product that has high quality and is tested regularly to ensure that, and those high standards will be maintained.

1430

REPORT ON VICTIMS OF ABUSE

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): My question is to the Attorney General. Attorney General, why are you spending taxpayers' money to appeal the decision of the Divisional Court into the release of the Grandview report?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): As I have said in this House before, the only reason we are appealing that is that we are concerned it may interfere with the successful investigation and prosecution of charges which have been laid and are pending in the Grandview case.

Mr Harnick: Attorney General, do you believe that the judges who made the decision, the judges of the Divisional Court, did not take those considerations into account when they made their decision?

Hon Mrs Boyd: At the Divisional Court level, the arguments from the criminal side were not allowed to be made, and one of the reasons for the decision to ask for leave to appeal was so that those arguments could be made before an appellate court judge.

NON-UTILITY GENERATION

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): My question is to the Minister of Energy. Mr Minister, you would know that last December there was a decision by Ontario Hydro in regard to the whole question of non-utility generation. Hydro, at the time, as you would know, had put on hold the future development of some

16 plants that were on the boards in regard to going ahead and providing power to Ontario Hydro, some of that for good reason.

There are a number of NUGs that are left in limbo, quite frankly, a number of NUGs, such as Northland Power up in Iroquois Falls, and in other communities, which have spent a lot of money in order to design, to get these plants ready in order to go into operation initially for about 1995. We also know that represents jobs for people around Ontario. It represents an importance to an industry that we're developing, not to say what it means to the local municipality with regard to a tax base and jobs.

The question I have to the minister is, we know that there is a decision shortly coming from the Ontario Hydro board, that the board itself will be coming to the province of Ontario and saying what the recommendation will be in regard to dealing with the whole question of non-utility generation. I would ask you if you can indicate to this House and to the members of my riding what we should expect to hear from Ontario Hydro fairly shortly.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): As I understand it, the Ontario Hydro board is considering this. There will be a recommendation at their May meeting, I understand, at which time they will deal with the question of the 16 non-utility generation proposals that have been put on hold.

Obviously, the Ontario Hydro board will make this decision. It is their decision; it is not a government decision. The decision will be made on the basis, I suspect, of taking into account the context of the surplus of electric generation and the various economic and environmental as well as agreement obligations that Ontario Hydro believes it has in regard to the 16 proposals that will be dealt with in that meeting.

NATURAL GAS

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Minister, this relates to what I believe and I think people who are aware of the situation will see as an imminent crisis for the gas consumers in the province of Ontario. This is an issue that is going to affect consumers directly in their homes and indirectly as business impact in terms of costing of natural gas flowing through to them.

The deregulation of natural gas pricing in 1986 and the subsequent competitive market that developed has saved people in Ontario literally millions upon millions of dollars. Recent events indicate that there have been changes in the supply-demand equation so that prices are moving up, and that's going to happen very soon. When these increases filter through the local utilities, Madam Minister, and the regulatory system, the people of Ontario and the industries of this province are going to face substantial price increases.

My question to the minister is this: Have you or your government undertaken any studies and evaluated the impact that this dramatic increase in gas prices will have on the consumers of this province? Minister, if you've done any kind of study or an impact study, I want to know how it's going to impact—you talked in your throne speech about an economic recovery. What impact is this price increase going to have on economic recovery and what's the impact going to be on the consumer? The average women and men in this province—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member complete his question, please.

Mr McClelland: —are going to be hard hit. What's the impact on them, Minister?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): I think that question would quite rightly go to the Minister of Environment and Energy.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The question is, of course, important in terms of the economic recovery. I think Ontario is in a very advantageous position in that we have a number of options in terms of fuel, the fuel storage in southwestern Ontario, the assistance that can be due in terms of alternative fuels, and I'm sure that the member is as concerned as I am with price. If he wants to give me some particular details, I'll follow it up.

Mr McClelland: Minister, let me refer you back to the original question. I'm surprised in a sense that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations didn't address this, because this is going to impact consumers very dramatically.

But to the Minister of Energy, sir, let me say this: You know the volume of gas that's consumed in Ontario is absolutely huge and that the implications will be felt immediately when price increases filter through the regulatory system.

The government is aware and, Mr Minister, you will be aware that in 1988 the Ontario Energy Board, in response to a reference from the Lieutenant Governor in Council, from cabinet, considered natural gas supply to meet the needs of Ontario and issued a report entitled Gas Supply. In that report, the board recommended that either by reference or by its own motion periodic reviews be undertaken and be conducted.

Minister, there's a dramatic price increase that's going to be in the minimum of \$750 million in this calendar year, impacting men and women in this province—\$750 million. We want to know, are you aware of it? If you are, what are you going to table, what are you going to show us? Have you referred it to the board for a reference? If not, why not, and when will you do it? Let's get on with it so the people of Ontario are prepared and we can respond and there can

be some direction from this government to protect consumers and business in this province.

Hon Mr Wildman: The member should be aware that, certainly, long-term supply is not a problem in this province, and the recent price hikes have now stabilized, but they've had the effect of increased drilling and well service activity and this is going to ensure that we have more alternative fuels in this province, not less.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Wildman: I beg your pardon?

Interjections: What's the cost?

Hon Mr Wildman: The cost is we're going to pay more, but it's also going to mean more alternatives for people. We'd be happy to deal with the issue in terms of the overall effects on the economy, but it means that there are alternative fuels that Ontario consumers and businesses can take advantage of.

LABOUR RELATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I understand the Treasurer will be here shortly. Perhaps I can start with the Chairman of Management Board, and if the Treasurer has up-to-date information and he arrives, we could deal with the appropriate referral at that time. Or if there is anybody else the Chairman of Management Board feels has more up-to-date information, that's fine too.

Yesterday in this House, the Premier said in response to a question about whether taxes would be on the table for social contract talks: "No, they will not. We will not be talking tax hikes. That is not what the social contract talks are for."

Yesterday, as well, Sid Ryan, president of CUPE Ontario, said: "We're on a collision course, there's no question about it. If Rae won't talk taxes he can take a hike, because we don't want to talk about the rest of the collective agreement stuff."

I would ask the Chairman of Management Board if, in his opinion or the opinion of the Treasurer or his government, he sees any room, anything left to negotiate when Sid Ryan says, "If they don't want to talk taxes, we won't talk anything else," and Bob Rae says, "There is no question that we're not going to talk about taxes."

As the Treasurer comes in, I might also then—while he gets briefed on the first part of the question—ask the Treasurer this: Given that Mr Decter said he would report to you today, Mr Treasurer, on whether he sees any hope for this faltering process, have you heard today, has Mr Ryan changed his mind, has the Premier changed his mind? If not, is the legislation ready to proceed?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): Mr Speaker, the Treasurer has arrived and I'll refer the question to him.

1440

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Minister of Finance.

Interjection.

The Speaker: You got lucky.

Interjections.

[Applause]

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Where were they when I needed them?

I do apologize for being late; I regret that, because my intention was to be here for the full question period today.

I think the question was, what is left to negotiate at the social contract table?

Mr Harris: Ryan says no to Rae, and now the Premier says no way on taxes.

Hon Mr Laughren: There's a lot of room in between there. Let's not be cataclysmic about these things.

As a government, we've said from the beginning that there were three approaches to this problem: One was expenditure reductions, and those are decisions that have already been made; a second set of proposals was a social contract table with our partners out there in the public sector; and the third is a revenue package, which will become known in the budget.

From the very beginning we have said that while we're willing to listen to ideas from whatever quarter, the tax package that will be brought down in the budget is not negotiable at the social contract table or anywhere else. That is a decision of government, to determine its particular tax regime at any given point in time. Nothing has changed in that regard.

I do appreciate, I might say, suggestions that I hear coming from time to time from people at the social contract table, because as a government that's more open than any government in the history of this province, we are more willing to listen to those suggestions.

Mr Harris: By way of supplementary, the Globe and Mail reported today that Gene Lewis of the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation said, "Union leaders prefer legislation forcing wage concessions to accepting cuts through negotiations." They prefer legislation. The union bosses know how to play this game. This is the way they play. We understand that. We wish they didn't; we wish they'd come into the 21st century, but they have not. They know they have to hang tough to be seen by their membership to be fighting to the bitter end.

Meanwhile, they also know, as Clyde Wells can tell you, as the public will tell you, as the membership is telling you, that the cost and the size of the civil service have to come down. They are saying, many of them,

that they'd prefer legislation. Do you have the legislation ready, Mr Treasurer? When can we expect to see it?

Hon Mr Laughren: I guess that is a fundamental difference between the leader of the third party and us.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): There aren't many left.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I'll try and ignore that interjection from the former Finance critic of the Tory party.

That was a serious question, which I need to remind members of from time to time. The fact remains that because one person out there says, "We don't want to negotiate"—if that's what he or she said, indeed—"we want legislation," that doesn't mean that's the way to go. We feel very strongly that the way to resolve the compensation problem in the public sector is to do it through negotiations.

For the leader of the third party to stand up and refer to union bosses—who, I might remind you, are elected by their membership; they're not appointed. I would just say to the leader of the third party, for heaven's sakes, let's give the negotiating process a chance to work. That's the difference between you and us: You wouldn't even give it a chance.

Mr Harris: Yesterday, Mr Decter said he welcomes the union's proposals, but warned a deadline for negotiations may be set soon. Yesterday, Mr Decter said as well it's not an unlimited process. These are the things that I've been trying to tell you, but you won't tell us what the deadline is. Yesterday, Mr Decter said, "I think there may be greater clarity in the next few days."

I'm asking you today, is there greater clarity in what the deadline is, and whether you're ready to legislate, given Mr Ryan's statements yesterday that he's going to take this government down, that, "I don't think he would bring in legislation." He doesn't think you're tough enough. I translate that into he can insist on whatever he wants because you're not tough enough on the other side of the issue. You won't put the balancing power in there. He'll strike, he'll be tough, because you don't have enough guts to legislate.

The Speaker: And the question?

Mr Harris: When is the deadline? Are you prepared to legislate so that we can have meaningful negotiations?

Hon Mr Laughren: I think with that approach, there would never be meaningful negotiations between two parties at a table. Never.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: Somebody throw them some raw meat over there.

We said right from the beginning, I could say to the leader of the third party, that Mr Decter was going to report back to me, as the Minister of Finance, today, and Mr Decter, I assume, is going to do that. He has not done so yet. He is going to report back to me on the extent to which there has been progress in negotiations.

Mr Harris: He says there is a deadline. A deadline or what?

Hon Mr Laughren: I would caution the leader of the third party from simply assuming that whatever's in the press is what's going on at the social contract table. That's not always the case.

Mr Harris: Mr Decter says there's going to be a deadline. The Premier yesterday said: "There is a deadline. I'm just not going to tell you when it is."

Mr Treasurer, my question to you is this: What's the deadline for? The deadline for another round of negotiations? A deadline to say, "We'll try again?" A deadline that Mr Ryan could bring you to your knees? A deadline for what? If the deadline isn't for legislation, what, can you tell me, is this deadline for?

Hon Mr Laughren: I think everyone understands that there must be progress at the contract table so that we can proceed with the tabling of a budget in this Legislature during the month of May. We've said that right from the beginning. So obviously—

Mr Harris: Or else what?

Hon Mr Laughren: The leader of the third party wants me to engage in some kind of hypothetical doomsday scenario in which negotiations don't work, and I'm not going to get drawn into that, because it would be a very bad signal to send to the negotiating table.

PETITIONS

ST LAWRENCE PARKS COMMISSION FUNDING

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition here signed by over 2,000 residents of eastern Ontario.

It is addressed to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Ontario, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the economy in eastern Ontario is desperately dependent upon the operation of tourist attractions such as Upper Canada Village and other programs operated by the St Lawrence Parks Commission, and

"Whereas recent news media reports indicate that the management of the St Lawrence Parks Commission is considering eliminating certain programs, service and staff positions,

"Therefore, be it resolved that the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation take steps to fully fund the operation of the St Lawrence Parks Commission for the budget year 1993-94 to ensure that there will be no

cutbacks in programs, services and staff."

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I have a petition that says:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insured benefits to Ontario drivers;

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

It has 23 signatures and I have affixed my name to it.

HYDRO PROJECT

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): I have a petition here from the people of Iroquois Falls, who are petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario in order for Ontario Hydro to support their proposed project of cogeneration in the community of Iroquois Falls.

I affix my name to those signatures.

1450

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

I have attached my name to this petition and I would like to indicate that in addition to riding associations, business and labour groups, the petitioners here—

[Interruption]

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Security. Stop the clock. A short recess.

Apologies to the member for Bruce. Restart the clock.

Mr Elston: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I was just about to note that in support of the Bruce A units, we have signatures on this petition from Ajax, Whitby, Mississauga, Janetville, Oshawa, Pickering and other places.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I again bring a number of petitions into the House, this time from the good people of Harrow, Ontario and from Windsor, Ontario, and they all say no to casinos.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party in the past vociferously has opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

Mr Speaker, I am very pleased indeed to affix my signature to this petition.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): I have a petition today from several residents of the north Simcoe area expressing their concerns with native hunting and fishing in the Williams Treaty.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I have a petition here that is signed by I think it's 13 people from the Ajax-Whitby-Scarborough area in support of the Bruce A rehabilitation and I've affixed my name.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan

currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers;

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in lower benefits for most injured people and higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

That's signed by Pat Shipticki from Clare Avenue, Jo Ann Doan from Fitch Street, M. Vincelette from Wallace Avenue and a whole lot of other good folks from the Welland area, and I of course have signed it, sir. Thank you kindly, Speaker.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A."

I have affixed my name to this petition along with the support that is shown by labour groups, chambers of commerce, councils, school boards and of course the Bruce Provincial Liberal Association, along with the associations of other parties whose names are to be mentioned later.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): I have a petition that's addressed to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and it talks about the hard economic times, the high unemployment rate and the tax increases in the province of Ontario. It says that the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefit programs to the drivers of Ontario and they are asking that Bill 164 be withdrawn.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I have a petition that says as follows:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A."

As you know, Mr Speaker, I have attached my signature to this particular petition and add to that the support of riding associations, labour groups, business associations, councils and school boards in the area, and as part of a petition that has well over 15,000 names attached to it.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has

traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has had a historical concern for the poor in society who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I affix my signature to this petition.

SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition of protest:

"We, the undersigned, are protesting the provincial government's planned cuts in budgets of an expected \$1 billion to the Ministry of Community and Social Services. In particular, we are concerned with the anticipated cuts to the community-based support for the people who have developmental disabilities.

"Already in 1992 agencies that support people with developmental disabilities have been hit with the combined cuts of at least \$12 million to \$14 million, and since 1987 community-based services have been in a considerable period of growth often with insufficient allocated resources. Institutions, on the other hand, have had a 24% distinct decrease in the number of people they house while the staff resources have only decreased by 7%.

"The names below are representative of the families and friends and the neighbours of those that may be impacted by service cuts to a person with a developmental disability."

I sign this petition.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): As you know, there is a petition in support of the continued operation of the

Bruce A nuclear power station and there are over 15,000 signatures attached hereto. I will read just in part this portion of the petition:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity."

That in part speaks to the issues addressed in the petition. I have signed my name on the petition as well.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment, and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers;

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

It's signed by about 85 of my constituents.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Over 15,000 people have signed this petition and this is another instalment. I will just read a portion of this support for the continued operation of Bruce A:

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity."

There are 26 names on this petition. I have attached my name to this petition. The people here are from Ajax, Whitby, Newcastle, Uxbridge and other places.

1500

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Peter Kormos (Welland-Thorold): I have a petition to members of the provincial Parliament. It reads:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38, which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the

fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on many families. The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter (51 per year) from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

That's signed by Margaret Kaptyn, Ed G. Meyer, John Abraham and a whole lot of other folks from Welland and area who know what family values and what Christian traditions and a common pause day are all about. I, of course, have affixed my signature.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

I have affixed my name to the petition, along with more than 15,000 others.

ABORTION

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I have the recommendations of the Task Group of Abortion Service Providers, and the group that signed the petition writes:

"We, the undersigned, protest these policies of the NDP government because (1), these policies are anti-family; (2), these policies will use our tax dollars to kill unborn babies; and furthermore, (3), these policies will cause essential hospital services to be slashed across the province of Ontario."

There are 38 signatures on this petition.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear

energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province.

"In addition to the undersigned, the petition is endorsed by the following municipal, business and labour groups:

"Councils: Bruce township, Huron township, Kincardine, Kincardine township, Owen Sound city, Port Elgin, Ripley, Saugeen, Tiverton;

"Chambers of commerce: Kincardine, Port Elgin and Southampton;

"Business associations: Kincardine BIA, Port Elgin Downtown BIA, Bruce County Realtors Association;

"Labour groups, including: CUPE 1000, the Society; Grey/Bruce District Labour Council; Ontario Nurses' Association, Kincardine and Southampton chapters; Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Association, District 44; Service Employees' International Union, Kincardine and Southampton; Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 527; Electricians Local 1788; Sheet Metal Workers Local 473; Ironworkers Local 736; Machinists and Aerospace Workers Local 1120; Hotel and Restaurant Workers Local 75; Bricklayers Local 12; Allied Trades Council, representing Carpenters Local 2222; Cement Masons Local 598; Labourers Local 1059; Insulators Local 95; Millwrights Local 1592; Operating Engineers Local 793; Painters Local 1590; Teamsters Local 230;

"Riding associations: Bruce Provincial Liberal, Bruce Provincial Progressive Conservative and the Bruce NDP;

"Bruce County School Board and Grey/Bruce Community Industrial Training Advisory Committee."

Attached hereto are, of course, 26 signatures from about the province. I have attached my signature as well.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Ms Haeck from the standing committee on regulations and private bills presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr1, An Act to revive 506548 Ontario Limited

Bill Pr2, An Act to revive the Women's Counselling Referral Centre

Bill Pr3, An Act respecting the Ontario Association

of Veterinary Technicians

Bill Pr21, An Act to revive John G. Todd Agencies Limited

Bill Pr36, An Act to revive Canindo Development Limited

Bill Pr84, An Act to revive Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Woodbridge.

Your committee recommends that the fees, and the actual cost of printing, be remitted on the following bills:

Bill Pr2, An Act to revive the Women's Counselling Referral Centre

Bill Pr84, An Act to revive Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Woodbridge.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ONTARIO CASINO CORPORATION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ DES CASINOS DE L'ONTARIO

On motion by Ms Churley, the following bill was introduced for first reading:

Bill 8, An Act to provide for the control of casinos through the establishment of the Ontario Casino Corporation and to provide for certain other matters related to casinos / Loi prévoyant la réglementation des casinos par la création de la Société des casinos de l'Ontario et traitant de certaines autres questions relatives aux casinos.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? No?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those against will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1507 until 1512.

The Speaker: Would all members please take their seats. It's not time for petitions. Would all members please take their seats.

Ms Churley has moved first reading of a bill entitled An Act to provide for the control of casinos through the establishment of the Ontario Casino Corporation and to provide for certain other matters related to casinos.

Those who are in favour of Ms Churley's motion should please rise one by one.

Ayes

Abel, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Charlton, Christopherson, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Coppen, Dadamo, Duignan, Farnan, Ferguson, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes, Grier, Hampton, Harrington, Haslam, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard,

Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martel, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Silipo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Wark-Martyn, Waters, Wessinger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wood, Ziemba.

The Speaker: All those opposed to Ms Churley's motion should please rise one by one.

Nays

Arnott, Beer, Bradley, Brown, Caplan, Carr, Cleary, Conway, Cordiano, Cunningham, Curling, Daigeler, Drainville, Elston, Eves, Grandmaitre, Harnick, Harris, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kwinter, Mahoney, Marland, McClelland, McLean, McLeod, Morin, Murphy, O'Neil (Quinte), Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poole, Runciman, Ruprecht, Sorbara, Sterling, Stockwell, Sullivan, Tilson, Turnbull, Villeneuve, Wilson (Simcoe West), Witmer.

The Speaker: The ayes are 62 and the nays 43. I declare the motion carried. Minister?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): Today I'm introducing for first reading the Ontario Casino Corporation Act. Since last year's budget announcement concerning casinos, many municipalities across Ontario expressed great interest in being part of this initiative. Members will recall that last October I announced that Windsor had been chosen as the site for a casino.

The Speaker: You will know that with first reading there should be simply a short statement of the purpose of the bill.

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): What is the purpose, Marilyn?

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): She doesn't know.

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): Marilyn, what's the purpose of this bill?

Hon Ms Churley: I'm making a statement telling you what the purpose of the bill is. I announced that Windsor—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order, order.

Mr Harnick: It's a tax on the poor; Bob Rae would call it a tax on the poor.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): This bill will never pass.

The Speaker: I'm attempting to bring the House to order.

A point of order, the member for Bruce.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Mr Speaker, it's very clear that the minister would wish to make a

statement. I would ask for unanimous consent for her to make her statement and have a brief reply from the critics. I think that would probably be the best way to do this.

The Speaker: Such a request is certainly in order. Is there unanimous consent for a statement to be made by the minister?

Interjections: No.

The Speaker: I would ask, first, that the House come to order, allow me the opportunity to hear the minister and that she would make a short statement of the purpose of the bill.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would just like to suggest that it's always been my understanding that on first reading of a bill, a minister is to just shortly and concisely enunciate the purpose of the legislation, not to give a ministerial statement. If she wanted—

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): A little less heckling and she might be able to.

Mr Eves: She didn't give a ministerial statement today. I was quite surprised that she didn't, but this is not the time to do it. Would somebody explain that to her over there, please.

The Speaker: Minister?

Hon Ms Churley: The purpose of the act which I introduced today is to establish the Ontario Casino Corporation Act, which will establish a crown agency known as the Ontario Casino Corp. The corporation will conduct and manage the games in the casino; to establish a gaming commission, which will set policy and ensure the integrity and honesty of gaming and safeguard the public interest. The act will amend the Gaming Services Act to ensure that all persons supplying goods in connection to the casino are registered. I urge all members to support this bill.

1520

OPPOSITION DAY ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Harris moved opposition day motion number 1:

Recognizing that the Ontario economy is experiencing significant structural change and acknowledging that the future wellbeing of all Ontarians, the maintenance of vital public services and the improvement of our standard of living depend on the ability of the province to attract new job-creating investment and on the capacity of Ontario firms and workers to compete in the global economy and to exploit new opportunities and markets; and realizing that huge deficits and high taxes limit the capacity of the province to compete for investment and jobs and to finance priority services, this House calls on the government:

— To ensure that its 1993 budget does not increase the tax burden on investors, consumers and businesses.

— To signal its determination to control public sector costs by setting a deadline for negotiations on the “social contract”, and to issue a clear statement that it will introduce legislation to achieve its cost-reduction targets in the event that the negotiations break down.

— To give a commitment that any tradeoffs in the social contract will not limit the flexibility of the government or of public sector managers to pursue the structural reforms in the delivery of public services necessary to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

— To introduce legislation to direct arbitrators in labour disputes in the Ontario public service and the broader public sector to consider the employer’s ability to pay in light of current provincial fiscal policy in making their decisions.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I appreciate very much the opportunity to speak to this motion. I also know that a number of my colleagues, in the time allocated to our party today, wish to get their viewpoints on the record, so I will not dwell at great length. The motion is pretty self-explanatory and pretty concise, pretty straightforward. Since I had an opportunity last night, through the miracle of Rogers cable television, to express my viewpoints to all of those—at no cost if they had cable TV; others paid \$500, for which I am very appreciative—and all of you had the opportunity, in a non-partisan way, to come and hear my remarks last night, I will not go on at great length today.

However, I do want to put a few things on the record. The resolution deals with what’s happening around the world today and how that impacts on Ontario. It deals with my grave concern that the Premier has part of the agenda right: He understands that the size and cost of government, over a 10-year period, has become out of whack with the taxpayers’ ability to sustain it; that we need in fact to restructure how we operate in this province.

If you look back over the last 10-year period, you will find that particularly during the last 8 years—but certainly let me be the first to acknowledge that the former Progressive Conservative government also contributed to this move towards government taxing more, spending more, having more involvement in our lives, essentially, cumulatively over this period of time, in fast-forward over the last eight years, saying to consumers, saying to families, saying to businesses, saying to Ontarians, “We can spend the money better or fairer than you can.” So government costs have mushroomed and exploded; the size of government has mushroomed and exploded. We’ve kind of gone to the private sector being squeezed out and the public sector growing.

What has happened today is that the taxation required to sustain that makes us uncompetitive. The regulatory framework that we have in place is so old-fashioned that the new jobs, the new opportunities, we’re having

difficulty being an attractive place for them to come invest and do business.

So while we’re supportive of a move to correct this imbalance—we are supportive of that, we’re supportive of a move to be able to downsize the costs and role and size of government in Ontarians’ lives—we are completely opposed to doing it unilaterally without a prosperity agenda or the prosperity plan to upsize the private sector. We do not want to see one civil servant lose their job, not one, unless at the same time there is a private sector opportunity for them.

So that’s what’s missing from these social contract talks. That’s what’s missing from the agenda today. While we’ve tried to hold the Premier’s hand and steer him along the correct path to follow—with some success, I think you would acknowledge—in recognizing the deficit matters, in recognizing that the size of government has to come down, we have not yet been able to convince the government—and I hope that this resolution will do it today and be approved unanimously by the Legislature—that the prosperity side, the upsizing of the private sector is, if not more important, just as important and must take place at the same time.

The specifics of the resolution:

The arbitrators: At the same time as these social contract talks are going on—the Premier says the goal is to cut \$2 billion out of the total public sector wage bill—arbitrators are giving increases two, three, four, five times the rate of inflation. This just can’t continue. The last time it was necessary—at that time because of runaway inflation in the 20% range; I think many will recall settlements in this range—we had wage and price controls, the 6 and 5 program. The only way they were effective was that as well as government setting the example, arbitrators had to take into consideration the government’s ability to pay, and the government had said, “We can pay 6 and 5 or we’re down the tubes.” Today the Premier is saying, “We can pay not the same amount but \$2 billion less or we’re in great difficulty.” That direction must be given to arbitrators as well.

We’re most concerned that the tradeoffs that the public sector is asking for may be worse than the short-term remedy. We’re concerned that the government may jump for a one- or two-year quick-hit solution. That solution, of perhaps a wage rollback in exchange for maintaining the exact same size of the civil service, will prevent some of the restructuring that must take place. That’s what we would like to see in the social contract talks. We’re concerned that’s not taking place, and we want to articulate that today and get the support of the Legislature for that today.

We want to have a level playing field. I mean, look, Sid Ryan says: “We’ll stomp on you. We’ll bury you. We’ll illegally strike” or “legally strike.” That’s on the one side. Every time that is said, the government is countering with: “Oh well, okay. We’ll still talk some

more. Oh well, we won't legislate. We won't make a commitment to legislate." Sid Ryan says: "They'll never legislate. We can do whatever we want." The Premier and the Treasurer respond with—well, I don't know. You see, this is not good enough.

For meaningful negotiations to take place, you need this level playing field.

1530

It's why we opposed, so strenuously, Bill 40. It tipped the balance: In order to bring management and labour together, they gave labour so much power that management would have to come in on its hands and knees to negotiate, which is why management, if it had a choice—and it does now in the new global economy; it has many choices—is saying, "We'd just as soon do business somewhere else." They're doing that and we're losing jobs. So we think this is important.

The tax burden: In 1990, when the Liberals left office, we were the highest-taxed jurisdiction in North America. There is no question about that. Quebec slipped ahead of us, although I think we're back ahead of Quebec now on the tax freedom day by one day, but there is still this year to take into consideration. Neither one of us, quite frankly, is competitive in this global marketplace on our tax levels, so we must deal with this on the government size and on the expenditure side. We are stating that today. We're firmly on the record on that and we're asking the government to recognize it.

I have a few comments on what is happening. We have a government opposed to free trade, but free trade is happening with or without us. Whether Ontario is opposed or not, it's happening. Whether Canada wants it or not, it's happening. That's the reality. The new jobs, the information jobs, the technology jobs, the satellite technology, the computer technology: It knows no borders. It's happening with or without us.

Because of some of the infrastructure investments that were made in Singapore, it is now cheaper, more expedient, to send information to Toronto, to Calgary, in the way that Calgary wants to get it, for many companies to send it to Singapore and back to Calgary. This is astounding, because we've fallen behind in our infrastructure and we've fallen behind in our regulatory framework.

Let me give you a couple of examples that we really must seize, because the opportunities are limitless. They're limitless. If this government were regulating over the last 100 years, I said last night—or if the Liberals, for that matter, because they frittered away all that opportunity in 1985 to 1990—we'd still be subsidizing buggy whips. We'd still be trying to bail them out and hanging on to those old jobs instead of moving to the new jobs and the new technologies.

This is what happened. This is why this province prospered for so many years. Government recognized

that. They didn't take all the wealth from the jobs of today and say, "We'll redistribute it all." They left some of that in the hands of the private sector to invest for the future jobs. They took some of that money to invest in new infrastructures for the next generation of jobs. They took some of it to relook at our education system for the jobs of the next 10 years, not the jobs of the last 10 years.

We didn't have this kind of planning for the last decade, and particularly the last eight years, and we're trying to tell you that we must catch up quickly, that we must have this kind of planning.

We must understand what's happening. There are new markets emerging: Mexico, 80 million people; South America; we look at what's happening in Argentina with a balanced budget today; Chile. They're moving to the marketplace and shortly they will have as many consumers as there are today in all of North America. Eastern Europe: many more consumers than we've had in North America, who have given us all the wealth and prosperity that we had up to this point in time. We look at Malaysia. We look at the hundreds of millions of people, the billions of people; China, when it wakes up.

There are so many opportunities for us if we'll wake up and understand that we can't bail out the old de Havilland jobs, that we can't bail out these jobs of the past. Technology is passing that by. We can invest in the future jobs, in the next generation of aircraft, in the way to manufacture those aircraft with fewer jobs.

We are seeing many job losses, and this is causing great fear and great concern, but we're seeing new investments by automobile companies but no new jobs. They're going to manufacture better automobiles, more of them, more efficiently, with fewer jobs. We need to get the new jobs that will allow them to do that. Inco now, the Treasurer will agree, I think is producing about three times the amount of nickel with a third of the employees of just maybe 15 or 20 years ago.

The new jobs, the ones we're losing—we've got to get the new ones. We need investment for that. We need the entrepreneurs to want to be in Ontario for that, and this new global economy knows no borders. You used to be able to manufacture for Ontario and make a buck, so you could put up borders and do that. You can't do that any longer.

I think of the regulatory changes. Here we have a cable company that's invested in fibre optics, we have a telephone company that's invested in fibre optics. We regulate one and say, "Well, you can only do the telephone part." We go to the other and say, "You can only do the TV part." If we had those kinds of regulations—some of this is federal, but when are we going to take the leadership here? If we had this kind of regulation when CN and CP were building railways across this country, if we said to CN, "Oh, you can only carry passengers," and to CP, "You can only carry freight," they never would have been built.

The regulation is for the old jobs, the old ways. We've got to get our regulatory process into touch with the new jobs, and this resolution recognizes that. This resolution is asking the government—unlike the Liberals from 1985 to 1990, when they frittered the money, when they tried to redistribute it all, when they tried to hang on to the old ways—it's asking this government to understand that there could be tremendous wealth, tremendous opportunity for Ontarians, if they will understand what's happening and get ready for it.

I said last night that we had, and I believe we still do have within our public service—that's almost a million people in the province of the best, the brightest, the most capable of any public service I've ever seen in the world. But we don't have good management. We don't have good management at the top. They're demoralized. They're discouraged. They don't know whether they're going to have a job tomorrow. They don't know whether the job's going to change. They're not sure for what purpose they're going to work.

By way of this resolution, we're calling on the government, don't throw anybody out of work. Don't throw any civil servant out of work unless you're prepared to understand that we need private sector jobs and opportunities for them at the same time.

This resolution addresses the turnaround management that's needed in this province. This resolution talks about how we can prosper, part of the prosperity agenda, the part that the NDP have completely missed, as the Liberals before them completely missed.

When we look at how we prospered in this province, when we look at how this Ontario always led the country when there was a recession, and there were some and there were mistakes made, it was Ontario that led this country. We were yours to discover. We offered to help. We led this country out of any recession we were in.

Now we're dragging the country down. We're dragging this country down. We're dragging ourselves down. We're saying to my children and to your children and to the children of Ontarians, "Even though we had all the hope and opportunity and prosperity and all the advantages, better than almost any other jurisdiction, if not every one in the world, we're going to stiff you with this deficit, with the highest taxation levels and with a government that's trying to hang on to the past."

I ask members to read the resolution carefully, I ask them to listen to the comments made today by the members of my caucus, who have spent three years developing a prosperity agenda and policies to put this province back on track, and I ask them to lift it from us. I ask them to take it and adopt it. I ask them to get us started in the right direction, because that will make our job a lot easier when we form the government two years from now.

1540

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): I listened quite carefully to the leader of the third party, and I want to tell you that I get quite nervous when a person who's formerly been responsible for negotiating early tee-off times comes in here and tells us how we're supposed to make this a more prosperous place to live.

I think that even the characterization of this resolution as being an agenda for prosperity comes close to being ridiculous. I want to address some of the comments that the leader of the third party made, and there are a number of my own colleagues who would like to make a contribution this afternoon.

The leader of the third party talks about prosperity and social justice and all those kinds of things that stick in his throat as they come out. I looked in today's Toronto Star, and there's a headline, "Harris Would Balance Budget In 3 Years." He of course would do that without tax increases, so there's no explanation about how that would come about. How would you get rid of that deficit?

My view, without having any explanation through this resolution, is that what Mike Harris and his Tory party friends are talking about is cut, cut, cut: cut the civil service, cut the jobs, cut spending. Tell us which children's aid society you want to close down. Tell us which hospital you want to close down. Don't tell us that you're going to balance the budget in three years. That's all warm and fuzzy, but then you leave out the details on this.

The leader of the third party mentions arbitrators. I find this passing strange, actually, that a question arose in the House not long ago about some interference and here we have the leader of the third party talking about arbitrators and the ability to pay and instructions thereof. I think that—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Mr Union Man.

Mr Owens: Yes, Mr Union Man, that's right, the member for Etobicoke West.

Interjections.

Mr Owens: Yes, I'm very proud of my background as president of CUPE Local 2001, Toronto General Hospital—1,100 members.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Order.

Mr Owens: Absolutely; extremely proud of the work I did with those individuals.

Mr Stockwell: How are you going to vote and legislate them back to work, Mr Union Brother?

Mr Owens: This is a very interesting commentary from the member for Etobicoke West who, as I said earlier, didn't quite get as upset when we introduced curbsiders, which was actually an assistance to his

particular line of work in his private life out there.

The leader of the third party has missed the total message around what this government's agenda is about, and just to remind the member for Nipissing and some of the other folks who are over there who have some uncontrolled necessity to talk while other people are speaking, we'll just go through this.

In terms of the reason that we're undergoing this process, it's in fact not what the leader of the third party alludes to in his newspaper article, in his much-touted appearance via teleprompter on Roger's Cable last night. It's that we are interested in not only the retention of jobs but the creation of good, long-term, paying jobs.

I also had the pleasure to chair a task force on cooperatives across the province. Mr Speaker, you're aware of this, as we've had a number of conversations around a dairy co-op in your area. This task force is looking at, again, the retention of capital and jobs in the community and giving people a sense of pride and worth. This again is all part of the larger government agenda.

Jobs: not the cutting of jobs, not the cutting of the deficit, not promising that we're going to eliminate the deficit, but that we're going to create jobs, and we're doing so through the Jobs Ontario program and other capital project announcements that we've had.

Services: Again, what does this article say about the cutting of services? It says, "We will balance the budget in three years." What's the subtext here? The subtext is that services will be cut, slashed, burned, eliminated, wiped off the face of the earth. But we in the province here will have a balanced budget, according to the Tory agenda, in three years.

Deficit: There's a big difference between the Mulroney Conservatives and their look-alike compatriots that occupy space here in the Legislature. Mulroney and company across the hall talk about the deficit, just the deficit. "Let's eliminate the deficit."

I think that anybody who has listened to the Premier, has listened to the Treasurer, has listened to colleagues around the House, understand that in terms of the deficit there is a difficulty. There's a difficulty as a result of the interest payments that this province, as a result of federal—and let's get this down to where it's at: It's the federal government that regulates the interest rates through the Bank of Canada. So you've had an artificial crisis created by the Mulroney Conservatives and again these look-alike compatriots who sit across from us in the House.

We now have a crisis that we are needing to deal with. We're not talking about paying off the deficit; we're talking about getting the public debt interest payments under control so that in fact our public debt interest payments will not equal our gross domestic product.

In terms of the approach we're taking, we have a very cogent and recognizable plan, and we characterize that plan as a stool. The first part of that stool is the expenditure management and that's doing a line-by-line—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. The honourable member for Scarborough Centre has the floor. Other members will have their turn. Interjections are out of order.

Mr Owens: Thank you, Mr Speaker. In terms of the expenditure management plan, we've taken a line-by-line examination of the amount, where and how money is being spent and looked to find ways that we can reduce the government spending.

In terms of the leadership that we have taken on this, I think it's not only second to none, it's leadership at its best, taking a look at how we can maintain the services that this province has at the level we're providing without moving the province into a fiscal crisis.

The second part of the process will be looking at taxes. My colleagues will have more to say on taxes at a later date.

The third leg of the stool is obviously—and this has been referenced by those arbiters of social justice in the third party—called the social contract.

This is a process where we are asking the stakeholders, the employers and the employees in the public service and the broader public service, to sit down with us so that we can share a problem with them and come to a mutually agreeable solution with a view to again maintaining the level of essential services we so badly need in this province and the kinds of services that have been provided by public sector workers which the member for Etobicoke West referenced earlier. As a former hospital worker, I'm acutely aware of the kind of services that are provided to the patients across the system.

The leader of the third party, while referencing Sid Ryan and making all kinds of other allusions to the fact that he perhaps knows something about negotiations other than, as I say, early tee-off times, talked about Bill 40 tipping the balance in favour of workers. I think that's a very interesting characterization, because one of the foundations of free enterprise and capitalism is the freedom of choice.

My question to the leader of the third party and to members opposite is: Why does the issue of choice as to whether or not one wants to belong to a union end, "Ask the workers"? We have employers coming forward saying: "My workers don't need a union. I'm a fair and equitable employer." Well, it was our view that the employees should actually have that say, and what a concept, workplace democracy. I think if you look at countries like West Germany that in the past have been world leaders in terms of production with an 88%

unionized workforce, they have demonstrated that unionization, productivity and workplace democracy have a place in this society.

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The leader of the third party referenced free trade and how it's an illusion and global markets are with us to stay. Well, I want to tell you something. Not only did I not see the leader of the third party on TV last night, not only did I not see him using a teleprompter last night, but I also didn't see him on the front lawn of the General Motors plant in Scarborough where 3,000 hardworking men and women are in the process of losing their jobs.

Mr Stockwell: Were you there?

Mr Owens: The member for Etobicoke West asks if I was there. Yes, I can assure him, through Mr Speaker, that I was there on the front lawn with the workers.

Mr Stockwell: Why are they losing their jobs? So we can legislate them back to work?

Mr Owens: It's very interesting. The member for Etobicoke West asks yet again, "Why did these workers lose their jobs?" Just in case they've missed the message, it's called free trade. What a concept, free trade. So what did we do? We closed down a productive and profitable plant in Scarborough, Ontario, and we moved it to Flint, Michigan. What a coincidence. Free trade. Political decisions made to close the plant in Flint, Michigan. There was an embarrassment. "We can't have American workers lose their jobs, so what we'll do, we will close the GM van plant in Scarborough." Three thousand hardworking men and women will go down the tubes as a result of this.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): That's despicable.

Mr Owens: The member in front of me says it's despicable. Well, it is despicable.

Let's talk about free trade and its non-effect on the province of Ontario. It's the fault of the NDP government, the third party would want you to believe. Well, I want to tell you something. Since free trade has come into being, this province has lost 200,000 jobs, and in my riding of Scarborough Centre there's been a big hit and workers, men and women, 30, 40, 50 years old, have been thrown out on to the trash heap because their employers have decided that they are going to move south.

Interjection: It's unconscionable.

Mr Owens: Totally. It's absolutely unconscionable, but there's no recognition for this as a reality in the Conservative mindset. That's why, Mr Speaker, and you may be aware of this, your party's called the Progressive Conservative Party, as it's been characterized as the forward-backward party: take two steps forward and four backwards. That's the way it plays out across this country as a federal government, as a former provincial

government and as a wannabe provincial government.

Just in terms of wrapping up, as I indicated, Mr Speaker, there are a number of people on my side of the House who would like to say something. Just a couple more things.

The issues with respect to technology that the member alluded to as being a Conservative commitment to technology, again we take a look at both the historical and the current context of Conservative parties.

First, as a historical context, we get rid of the Avro Arrow that would have put Canada in the forefront of aviation and aerospace research. But no, we can't do that. We have to send our brains, our talents, our engineering ability to the United States. De Havilland Aircraft—the federal Tories are ready to sell it to multinational, transnational interests, lock, stock and barrel. That's the Conservative commitment to technology in this province.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I want to say on behalf of the government and my minister that we are clearly interested in investing in jobs and people and preserving the public services that we have developed over the years, like health care and education. In order to continue to do these things at the level of excellence that we have developed, we have to do better and look to managing our finances and managing the growth in the Ontario deficit.

I think we've presented a balanced package to the people of Ontario. I think we've presented a balanced package to the broader public sector and asked for their participation, and I'm optimistic, as well as my government, that we'll be able to come to a reasonable negotiated package.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for his participation. Further debate, the honourable member for Oriole.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): I'm pleased to participate in today's debate and, as I read over Mr Harris's opposition day amendment, what came to mind was a quote that I came upon recently. I believe the quote was by John Kenneth Galbraith, and it says, "Politics is not the art of the possible; it is the art of choosing between the unpalatable and the despicable." Often in this House, as we describe how issues are not black and white, it is this quote that I'm sure will come to my mind on a fairly regular basis.

The resolution that Mr Harris has put forward, when you read it, has a tone of reasonableness to it. He refers to the fact that Ontario is experiencing significant structural change, and that is true. He says that the ability of the province to attract new job-creating investment and the capacity of Ontario firms and workers to compete in a global economy will be compromised by huge deficits and high taxes, and I agree with that.

He goes on further to say that in order to be able to finance our priorities we must be fiscally responsible, and he then outlines some very specific suggestions, the sorts of things that the government should consider. What he calls upon the government to do in this amendment I'd like to comment on specifically because, while I agree with the tone, my approach and our approach in the Liberal caucus would be very different than the Conservative approach, and it certainly would be very different than the NDP approach. I'd like to use my time to just explore what those different approaches would be.

I believe that this is the wrong time for us to have any new taxes, and I hope the Treasurer will listen to what the Liberal caucus had to say in its report to the finance and economics committee and not increase taxes in this upcoming budget. New taxes would have a detrimental effect on economic recovery, which is sluggish and slow, and I predict that the Treasurer will heed those warnings and will not increase taxes as he looks to enhance his revenues.

I think he will do that by adding into the budget about \$550 million in payments from the federal government from the fiscal stabilization fund. I think he will do that by at least \$1 billion in asset sales. He may do it with other ways rather than a direct tax increase, and I hope that when he's talking about revenue enhancements he is not talking about new taxes, because frankly I believe that Ontario today, particularly the middle class and my constituents in the riding of Oriole, is feeling overtaxed and overburdened, and that has led to a feeling of fear and despair as people worry about losing their jobs and despair at the loss of opportunities and the tragic consequences of those businesses that are closing and jobs that are lost. So I do believe that there should be no new taxes in the Treasurer's upcoming budget.

I would like to talk about the second component, which is to signal its determination to control public sector costs regarding setting a time line for negotiations in their discussions on the social contract. Then Mr Harris suggests that the government introduce legislation to achieve its cost reduction targets. They're \$2 billion over and above the expenditure control plan that the Treasurer tabled.

I would say my preference would be for a negotiated settlement and a collective bargaining approach. I believe that this government set out on a very dangerous course when it began to intrude in the collective bargaining process in this province in an unprecedented way, and my question in the House today reflected that. They are the direct employer of some 90,000 people in the Ontario public service. They are not the direct employer of the over 800,000 people who work in our colleges, our universities, our hospitals and our municipalities.

My concern is that they have not explored the opportunity to collectively negotiate and to bargain with their own employees and to set a model agreement that could then be used by the other employers in the broader public sector to do what is probably one of the most difficult things to do, and that is to take back that which has been given.

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I'll point out to you, Mr Speaker, that the reason this government is facing the need to take back and lower wage costs in the broader public sector is because of the agreement that they entered into with their own employees late in 1990 and early in 1991, and it's unfortunate that they were so misguided. It is unfortunate that they did that, but we all realize that they made a mistake, and the hardest thing to do, as I said, is to take it back.

It's my hope that legislation will not be necessary, but the fact that they started this negotiating process so late, that we are already now into the next fiscal year, puts enormous pressure on all of those people delivering important public services in the broader public sector. We know the reality is that there must be a deadline for discussions and negotiations, and it's only because of the incompetence of the government as it approached this negotiating process too late in last year's fiscal year, too late to realize the implications of what it was doing, that we're faced with this enormous problem today.

I would like to say that I understand what is happening in Ontario today, and I understand the need for government to look at everything it does to ensure that the taxpayer is getting value for money. Whether you call it reinventing government, as David Osborne has, whether you call it process re-engineering, whether you call it restructuring, reform is essential. We have to find better ways of delivering the services that we deliver. We have to do it efficiently and cost-effectively so that the people of this province will know they're getting value for money, because if we're going to keep taxes down and maintain service delivery, we must eliminate those things which are wasteful and unnecessary. We must also ask those tough questions about what we should be doing and what we should not be doing as government.

The last point I'd like to make is that I believe that there is a need for reform in the arbitration process, but I don't believe that you need to legislate that. That's where my approach would be very different from Mr Harris's approach. I believe by government policy you can fetter an arbitration process to make sure that those arbitrators must consider the public interest and the ability to pay. There are problems in the arbitration process as it exists today. Part of those problems is because the arbitrators look at the decisions the government has made and the awards the government has

given to its own employees, and so we have seen a number of arbitration awards which have resulted in very, very high awards at a time when the province simply could not afford it.

In this time of difficult decision-making, as I consider this opposition day amendment, as I hope that collective bargaining would be the preferred approach, as I say to those people in the broader public sector, I believe that the approach of the NDP government has been an intrusion in the collective bargaining process which is unprecedented and which will for ever change collective bargaining in this process, it's my hope that people will be able to come together to solve the very serious problems that we face.

But as I look at this opposition day amendment, the choice for me is between the unpalatable and the despicable. The "unpalatable" is many aspects of Mr Harris's opposition day motion, but "despicable" is the approach that the NDP has taken to solving the fiscal problems of this province, to managing the realities of this province, to the chaos and confusion and incompetence that we've seen from this government, and so I must support this opposition day amendment.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you for your participation. Further debate?

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I'm pleased to speak to the motion that has been moved by my leader, which calls on this government "to ensure that its 1993 budget does not increase the tax burden on investors, consumers and businesses; to signal its determination to control public sector costs...; to give a commitment that any tradeoffs in the social contract will not limit the flexibility of the government or of public sector managers to pursue the structural reforms in the delivery of public services necessary to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness"; and finally "to introduce legislation to direct arbitrators in labour disputes in the Ontario public service and the broader public sector to consider the employer's ability to pay in light of current provincial fiscal policy in making their decisions."

As we all know in this province, our economy is experiencing a significant structural change. Our future wellbeing, the maintenance of our vital public services and the improvement of our standard of living depend on our ability to attract new job-creating investment and on the capacity of Ontario firms and workers to compete in the global economy and to exploit new opportunities and markets.

However, we must recognize that this capacity to compete for investment and new jobs and to finance priority services is severely limited by the huge deficit and the high taxes that we presently face in this province, deficits and taxes that could even be higher after the 1993 budget is released by the Treasurer.

Ontarians today already are saddled with \$66.3 billion

in debt, debt that has accumulated as our government kept spending on the services that the public was demanding. We know that during the 1980s Ontario revenues increased by about 10% per year. This was due in part to a strong economy. However, instead of squirrelling the money away for a rainy day, the Peterson Liberal government spent virtually every new dollar collected. By the late 1980s Ontario spent more on a per capita basis than any other province in Canada. Health care, social services and education were allowed to increase at rates in excess of inflation. Public sector wage settlements, which represent a very hefty portion of the budget, also kept ahead of the inflation rate.

Now it is time for this government to come to terms with the fact that the world has changed and that our economy is experiencing structural change. This government faces a difficult situation, a situation that I have indicated has been made more difficult by the fact that he did inherit the Peterson legacy. The Peterson legacy, as I've just mentioned, occurred—

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Would you check quorum, please?

The Acting Speaker: Could the table check if there is a quorum, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: Quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Quorum now is present. The honourable member for Waterloo North has the floor.

Mrs Witmer: As I just indicated, the problem in this province has been aggravated by the fact that the NDP inherited the Peterson legacy. As I mentioned, during five of the most prosperous years of the Ontario economy, from 1985 to 1990, Peterson continued to tax and spend instead of paying down the deficit. However, the option to tax is no longer available to any government. We can no longer raise taxes or allow the deficit to climb higher. We have reached, in this province, the breaking point. To insist at this time on a \$2-billion tax grab, as the Premier has indicated that he plans to do in the 1993 budget, is to take two steps back from economic recovery and condemn tens of thousands of Ontarians to continuing unemployment and compound the deficit problems.

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It is absolutely imperative that this government, as it gropes its way out of its crippling provincial debt and towards a social contract with the public sector workers and a budget for 1993, resist the temptation to unload Queen's Park problems on the local property tax base by slashing grants for local services and attempting a clawback of municipal revenues. The local property tax base is not the place to fight the provincial deficit,

because no matter who grabs the goods, it's the same taxpayers who pick up the tab.

The Premier should look in his own backyard for the cuts in order to ensure that the 1993 budget does not increase the tax burden on the people of this province. Rather, what it appears that he is doing is passing the chore of handing out the pink slips to the local public bodies, such as the regional and municipal councils and the school boards. Indeed, in my community, the region of Waterloo, these bodies have shown a lot more determination than Queen's Park in restraining the burden on the taxpayer. The region of Waterloo has balanced its budget for years because it has attempted to control its wage settlements and it has made program reductions.

This government must also give a commitment that any tradeoffs in the social contract will not limit the flexibility of the government or of public sector managers to pursue the structural reforms in the delivery of public services necessary to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

There needs to be a change in government thinking, a change that we're starting to see but we're not seeing enough of yet. We can no longer afford the style that government is used to. We can no longer send 15 people to a conference when two would do. We don't need any more handouts and promotions, such as buttons and posters and mugs, glossy media handouts that are printed by the hundreds. This government needs to create incentives to encourage all of its employees to come up with ways to be more efficient and to do more with less.

Some of the measures that this government could look at to improve cost efficiency and effectiveness include fraud control measures for Comsoc benefits and health card verification. We've heard of the tremendous abuse of the health card system which is costing us millions and millions and even perhaps billions of dollars.

This government could take a look at reducing the millions of dollars that it's presently spending on non-profit housing units at a time when we have a record number of vacancies within the private sector available. You are planning to increase annual spending in the non-profit housing sector from \$625 million to \$1 billion by the year 1995. Well, I would suggest, as our leader and our party has suggested, that it would be much more efficient that the private sector provide the housing and reduce the need then for the tax hikes in the upcoming budget by the amount that could be saved.

These are some of the measures that this government needs to be taking a look at in order to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness. They should also be taking a much more serious look at the cost-saving suggestions made by the Provincial Auditor each year. Unfortunately, the report of the auditor often gathers dust.

One of the suggestions that was made last fall and that I happened to see because a newspaper reporter did bring it to my attention in the Kitchener-Waterloo Record, was in the area of police training. It indicated that at the present time recruits get hired and go to the Ontario Police College at Aylmer for 47 days of training, and this costs the taxpayers \$44 million per year. Unlike a skilled tradesman, a chef, a teacher, a lawyer or a doctor, police recruits presently are not required to make an investment in their career. Most other people, when they seek out a career, pay the tuition and invest the time long before there is any job guarantee.

The auditor has suggested that prospective police candidates should take a course in basic policing at a college before being hired, and job training then, at a later time, could be more practical and specific. He also suggested that students should pay a modest tuition fee. This could save \$8 million a year.

The auditor's report, I would suggest to the government, gives many other suggestions which need to be given serious consideration for government reform in the delivery of public services necessary to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

This government could have avoided the current crisis if it had listened to our leader and to those of us in the PC caucus and to other Ontarians. Shortly after you delivered your first budget, we, along with thousands of people in this province, made suggestions to you to balance your budget. We suggested that you could do this and still preserve jobs and provide incentives for businesses to invest. We urged you to create an economic climate that was conducive to job creation and investment, a climate which could help restore consumer confidence, which is badly lacking in this province at the present time. Instead, all we've seen are higher taxes, more government spending, more government red tape, more government regulations and bills such as Bill 40, which did everything possible to destroy job creation.

Although time is now running out for this government, I encourage you to support the motion that has been put forward by our leader today, a motion which reflects the pleas of the hardworking citizens in this province, a motion which is going to require restraint, discipline and adherence to a plan and, finally, a motion which can save future generations billions of dollars and help restore economic confidence in this province in order that we can create the new jobs and encourage new investment.

In conclusion, I urge this government to ensure that our children do not grow up carrying a debt and a burden that we have never had to face.

Mr David Winninger (London South): I listened carefully to the remarks of the leader of the third party. I noted that he began on the right path by acknowledging that the economy is undergoing structural changes

and that the future of Ontario depends on our ability to attract new investment. Sadly, along the way, the leader of the third party took detours and wound up in several dead ends, as it were, because deficits and selective taxes do not necessarily impair our ability as a province to compete for investment and jobs.

A government may run a deficit, for example, as this government did in 1991-92, to create jobs through the improvement of our infrastructure: our schools, our hospitals, our roads, our communication systems, our water treatment plants. All of these initiatives make Ontario a better place to invest, just as access to quality health care and education make Ontario a better place to invest.

In fact, Ontario leads the rest of the country in the creation of new jobs, and in fact, much of this growth in new jobs is in southern Ontario, where my riding is located. Many of these jobs are, of course, export-driven, and I note with some satisfaction the decision of Dimona Aircraft to establish in London an aircraft building plant. I also notice with satisfaction that General Motors in London, diesel division, is able to continue to secure some fairly lucrative contracts to build locomotives for export to the US. Then of course there are the continuing military contracts. Not far away, in Windsor, Chrysler has resolved to invest a further \$600 million in upgrading its Chrysler mini-van plant.

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So we do have positive signs of investment in Ontario. Those who suggest that Ontario is an expensive place to do business might be mindful of the comments of Mr Foxcroft as quoted in the Hamilton Spectator not long ago. Mr Foxcroft moved his operation to Tonawanda, New York, where he manufactures athletic mouth guards. Since the move, Mr Foxcroft notes that it's cheaper to produce in Canada even though real estate taxes and hydro are more. He found that real estate taxes and hydro may be cheaper south of the border but all other costs in American dollars are higher, and in Ontario you have a more reliable workforce, there's more of a team effort and all costs are in Canadian funds. So you have a competitive advantage here in Ontario.

Certainly, Ontario's strengths cannot be underestimated: the quality of life I spoke of earlier, the well-trained labour force, the proximity to markets, the quality infrastructure and access to good public services. But we are of course concerned with the rising provincial debt. As the vice-president of Canadian ratings at Moody's recently observed, current provincial deficits in Canada are already at the point where they are not sustainable any longer.

Saskatchewan and Newfoundland have taken dramatic steps in March to adopt lean new budgets. Saskatchewan, which has the highest per capita debt in Canada,

announced higher corporate, sales and fuel taxes. Newfoundland has announced wage and benefit cuts to government employees of \$70 million. British Columbia has increased its personal income surtax, its corporate tax and its retail sales tax. New Brunswick has taken action and so has Manitoba.

It would be remiss for this government, in addition to reducing spending and in addition to negotiating a social contract with our partners in the broader public service, not to consider selective tax increases, as the other provinces are doing as well.

It's no secret why some tough decisions are being made. We all know that this recession has resulted in a drop in revenues to the province. We all know that there is increased spending on social assistance and training during these tough times; in fact, our social assistance spending has virtually doubled to \$9.5 billion. At the same time, we're struggling with reduced federal transfer payments that have taken \$4.5 billion out of the economy for 1993-94.

So as we view our mounting debt, a high percentage of which goes to foreign lenders, we have to be very concerned about the effect on our domestic currency, our interest rates and our ability to continue offering the public in Ontario health care, education, training and social assistance.

We can avoid a high per capita debt such as Saskatchewan, Newfoundland, Quebec and New Brunswick are currently labouring under, and we can avoid it by a combination of reduced spending, selective tax increases, social contract and at the same time finding new ways to compete in the global economy and create and protect jobs.

Certainly, President Clinton, south of the border, recognizes that the supply-side economics of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher have not been successful. In fact, they've been disastrous, because they have created high deficits, reduced public services and caused a lot of hardship, not only for individuals but also for communities.

We have taken measures to address the deficit already: We've allowed a one-time increase of 2% for our major transfer recipients; we've restructured the Ontario student assistance program; we've deferred the extension of pay equity to 1998; we've imposed salary freezes on cabinet, MPPs, senior public servants. We've also made strides in controlling our expenditure increases: In fact, excluding increases in spending on social assistance and our debt load, our spending has only increased by 1% in 1992-93. Certainly, the spending cuts have had a direct impact on the economy and must be balanced with selective tax increases.

We need selective tax increases to preserve essential services and to control the deficit. Taxes are an integral part of our overall fiscal strategy. They have to be. But

our taxes have to be selective and they have to be fair. In the past our tax increases have been largely focused around the personal income tax system, based on ability to pay. You may recall that one of our first acts in government was to take more than 120,000 of the working poor off the income tax rolls and later to impose a higher surtax on those with ability to pay.

The Liberals raised taxes by \$1.5 billion in 1988-89, at a time when provincial revenues were virtually unprecedented, and by \$1.4 billion in 1989-90. Moreover, regressive taxes such as the provincial sales tax went up from 7% to 8%. So remember that.

During 1981, the Tories, during a time of weak economic growth, increased the personal income tax by four points at a clip.

We at least are seeking to reduce our provincial spending by several billion dollars in the face of the fiscal reality we're dealing with today. But we still remain favourable: We're fifth among provinces in terms of the provincial income tax; our corporate manufacturing tax is four points lower than in the United States, on average; and our health care costs are much lower—\$700 per individual here compared to \$4,200 per employee in the US.

The federal Tories, since they were elected in 1984, have implemented 34 tax increases—federal sales tax, goods and services tax, personal income tax surtax, increasing unemployment insurance premiums to employers—and yet they still have a staggering debt and a very substantial deficit. So for the leader of the third party to say that he will wipe out this deficit in three years is the same kind of voodoo economics that Prime Minister Mulroney promised in 1984 and has failed to realize upon.

1630

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I appreciate the opportunity to join this debate today and address some of the economic and budget issues that face the Legislature, that face the government and that certainly face the province.

I've been interested in recent days to see the strategic hand of my friends in the Conservative Party. I listened with some interest this afternoon to the leader of the third party and the member for Waterloo North in their submissions. I have a feeling that the member for Etobicoke West will favour us with a lively comment this afternoon on this subject as well.

I just simply want to say to my colleagues in the House and to the audience which might be watching this on television that the public has a chance, I think, to assess us all against the records we've had in government. Now, we will all say, particularly those of us not in government, that in some respects we've changed our spots, and elect us and we'll behave differently. I do not want to engage in a debate about what went on here in

the 1980s, but I could.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): I guess not.

Mr Conway: No, I say I am proud of what we did in the Peterson government. I accept that it was not all perfection. I accept that we ruffled some feathers. I do admit that we raised taxes to pay for programs that some of my honourable friends feel were overblown and too generous, and that's entirely their right.

I don't remember the member for Nipissing resisting some of the spending that went on in his constituency. I remember the member for Nipissing crying out, on the one hand, that we were spending too much, and then, to quote him directly, "But I demand my share of the waste." I'm not into that kind of politics. Bob Nixon and David Peterson balanced the budget. We did it by raising taxes and we did it by accepting a very healthy measure of growth; I accept that.

Interjection.

Mr Conway: I hear my friend from Brockville chortling. We did, in that respect, what Frost and what Robarts did for two decades. Listen: I am just simply saying that I understand how people would do it differently and we're all going to have to do it differently because we cannot, in these new days of the 1990s, imagine that we're back in the late 1980s or in the early 1960s; clearly we're not. We have reached the limits of growth, apparently.

I will say quite candidly that when I look back at the 1980s, there is no question that growth allowed us to do a whole series of things that my honourable friend the member for Nickel Belt cannot now do, but in that respect we're absolutely no different than the Davis, Frost and Robarts crowd who ran this province as "good managers" for some 32 years. They deserve a great deal of credit for a lot of what they did and they deserve healthy criticism for some mistakes that I think even my honourable friends in the third party now acknowledge they made.

Hon Mr Laughren: Forty-two years.

Mr Conway: Forty-two years; I accept the correction.

I'll cite one example. I have a great respect for the former Premier, Mr Davis. I was the one in this assembly who was charged with implementing his school policy announced in June 1984. Mr Davis and his then deputy minister, the deputy in the Premier's office, Dr E.E. Stewart, put forward a policy in June 1984 around extending funding to the separate school system in Ontario and, helpfully, they added a funding formula that they thought was required to give effect to that policy.

I will just say to my friend the member for Waterloo North that I would not want to embarrass her, but let me tell you that the arithmetic of Mr Davis and his

friends in that government was inadequate, to say the least.

I often think, how is it possible, having all of the experience that Mr Davis and Mr Stewart had in the education area, that they could have offered a policy and suggested that it was going to cost—I think it was—\$40 million or \$50 million. All I know, as the responsible minister, is that what was suggested and what was actually required were miles apart.

We were, as a party, committed to it. Unlike my honourable friends who campaigned vigorously against my party in 1971, who said, “Never, never, never,” we were consistent. You can argue that it was a wrong position, but I’m just simply making the point that for anyone in this assembly, but most importantly my friends in the Conservative Party, to now lecture the rest of us about our failings and our inadequacies—and I admit mine; they are several—I just don’t think does the political process much good.

I agree with the Treasurer. My friends in the third party are advancing what is, in many ways, a Reaganite-Thatcherite policy these days. I said here a few months ago, I think to—

Interjection.

Mr Conway: The member for Oakville South is here saying that he is totally opposed to taxes. I understand that position; I understand it entirely. He may in fact be favoured with the responsibility to give effect to that policy. But I am simply saying that he and his colleagues in the third party have an obligation, like we in the Liberal Party have and like my friends in the government have, to be honest, and there is a fundamental dishonesty about a lot of the debate that’s occurring today.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Give us your solutions.

Mr Conway: My solutions are not as simplistic and are not as heroic as my those of friends opposite.

Mr Carr: We’re all listening. We’ve got time.

Mr Conway: Well, I tell you, I was in a government where we were prepared to tax for the programs that people said they wanted. Now I understand that there are a lot of people today who don’t want taxes raised, and I’m one of them, but I understand the corollary, the consequence of that decision and it is significant program cuts in health, education and social services, and in the latter category I don’t include just welfare payments but a lot of payments to seniors.

My friends in the third party talk about the way in which the Peterson Liberals spent. Well, I’m going to cite two of the entitlement programs that are driving the Treasurer mad these days, programs like the drug benefit program established in 1974, not by a New Democrat or by a Liberal government, a program that was fundamentally flawed in its initial design, and then

I look at the teachers’ pension deal of 1975, battles that I fought and lost, I admit, three years ago, but I notice that it’s costing hundreds of millions of additional dollars annually. It’s an extremely generous entitlement that is costing a great deal of money, and that was a program and an entitlement that was agreed to by William Davis on the eve of an election campaign in 1975.

I remember coming here in 1975 when my friend W. Darcy McKeough, MPP for Kent West and provincial Treasurer, put before this assembly in 1975 a \$2-billion deficit on a \$12-billion or \$13-billion expenditure plan, and Darcy McKeough was a pillar of the Tory establishment. I look back on that now and say, “Can you imagine a \$2-billion deficit on a \$12-billion or \$13-billion expenditure plan?”

Now, I simply say that that’s the past; we have to look to the future. I am quite prepared to say to my constituents: “I hear you. You want your taxes moderated and you want the deficit dealt with and that leads inevitably to some very painful choices.”

My friend the member for Oriole was right to point out—I think she was quoting Galbraith who said that in politics the choices are not as we would like them. Anyone charged with the responsibility of government will tell you that. We have many people in the third party who have not had that experience here and they may very well have it and I would not wish them—

Mr Stockwell: Sure you would.

Mr Conway: No, I wouldn’t, because I think I see what lies before us. I don’t envy the task that my friend the Treasurer or the Minister of Finance has today. I have a very real criticism about the way in which this government has performed in the last number of months.

I look at the announcement of two weeks ago and I say to myself, there’s no surprise in this. They have known for months that their revenue situation was serious. They have been told by their international bankers and by others that they simply cannot continue a situation—because none of us can—where 30% of all program spending is on borrowed money. That is simply not on for any of us.

I say to the House and I say to my constituents, I understand what you want done, but you must understand me, as your trustee; I am no magician. If we are going to reduce the deficit, and I think we must, if we are going to hold the line on taxes, and I think we must, then we have to look at programs. And 76% of all spending in the province of Ontario today is in four categories: health, education, social services and debt servicing. Let there be no one in this assembly under any illusions as to where you’re going to have to cut if you’re going to do what many of the taxpayers want.

I said to the Minister of Health the other day and I

will repeat it now: The government of the day plans to take \$200 million this year out of the drug benefit program and one twelfth of this fiscal year has now passed. Let there be no confusion, particularly to my friends in the third party who, I think, want to build perhaps more bridges to the seniors' community than the rest of us. Wait till the phones start ringing, and they are going to be ringing. They are going to ring right off the wall. Two hundred million bucks we're taking out of that program this year. I think I know how the government is going to do it, and it is not going to pass unnoticed.

I am quite prepared to say to my constituents that we have got to all share in this responsibility. This business where our politics is nothing but a potlatch of special interests has got to end. We have all got to get back to our communities and rediscover the notion of a broad citizenship where we have interests as a community beyond our interests as teachers, as labour leaders, as farmers, as pensioners, that there is a broad public interest that is going to require a common commitment on all sides, with fairness and equity to do some things that in the public interest have to be done. We are but days away from a real test of that.

1640

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): He's not a social democrat.

Mr Conway: I don't believe I'm a social democrat, though I respect tremendously much of the social democratic tradition.

The Treasurer opined parenthetically a few moments ago about Reagan. I said here a few months ago, go back and read the Stockman piece in the Atlantic Monthly from 1981—a transparent fraud being admitted to by the architect of that scheme—and the right wing has nothing to beat its breast about when it comes to good fiscal management, if one looks to the United States.

Mr Carr: Look at the Congress.

Mr Conway: Well, he says, "Look at the Congress." I'm looking at the Reagan plan. Listen, I can quite frankly take a defeat at the polls. I am well beyond lying to my electorate just to win some opportunity at government, and I would say to everyone in this assembly that we had better bloody well get a little more real and a little more honest about what it is we are offering because you know the prize is that you might actually win the responsibility of government.

There's Bill Clinton down in Washington today now having to admit that his offering about a middle-class tax cut and—

Mr Stockwell: That was bunk from the word go.

Mr Conway: It was. Of course it was bunk the day he opened his mouth.

Mr Stockwell: So was minimum corporate tax.

Mr Conway: Well, I am listening to my friends in the third party with some of their offering, and I simply say to them they'd better come clean with what it is they intend for the people, because I will make this observation. I want to get, as I think all members do, the economy moving again.

But my expectation is that we are going to have more limited growth in the coming years than we've had at any time in the post-war period. So none of us is going to be able to play the growth game the way we all have for the last 35 or 40 years, and that is all of us.

I look at this resolution and what does it say? Well, it says that the third party doesn't want tax increases. I don't either. But I do say this, that if we want the kinds of services that we all want—you know, I heard the member for Waterloo North. I remember her when she was coming to make submissions to me as Minister of Education, and I tell you that you can't have it both ways.

I say to my friends in this assembly that there is clearly a new imperative to which we're all going to have to respond. The government I think failed in its duty to move more quickly with the financial crisis that it's now facing. If four or five months ago—I believe two years ago the spending ought to have been substantially moderated, not because I want to cut back and roll back, but we simply didn't have the dollars to pay the bills.

Now, two and a half years into the mandate and well into the third fiscal year, we are going to face some much tougher choices than would otherwise have been required had the government of this province moved at least a year and a half ago. I can understand how in the first year of a new government they might have not read the signals, but the signals have been there painfully and clearly for the last two years and they have not been responded to. I think the Rae government has failed in a very major responsibility to react to a worsening financial situation.

I am not a slash-and-burn type who says we should balance the budget tomorrow, though we could do it. We could do it. We could balance our budget tomorrow and have an enormous deficit on the human account that I think would be absolutely intolerable and very counterproductive. I don't believe we should be slashing social programs only to pile additional and scarce resources into policing, because that's not the kind of Ontario in which I want to live.

I am concerned, very concerned, as the member for Renfrew North, about the problems I am seeing in my communities of Pembroke and Cobden and Beachburg and Deep River and Barry's Bay about jobs, people out of work in record numbers, blue-collar and white-collar, young, middle-aged and older people, male and female, old Canadians, new Canadians. This economic recession has cut across all economic and sociological strata.

We have got to be concerned, as members in this Legislature, about the job situation that's out there. That's why I personally favour a very wide restraint-rollback program, so that we can reduce public expenditures while at the same time keeping as many people working as possible, because we gain nothing if we slash and burn and put thousands more people on to the welfare rolls, the unemployment rolls or some other kind of public assistance.

Yes, we have got to change the way we do business. As a Liberal, I believe that we have to be concerned not just about good fiscal management, but we have to be worried about the social agenda as well. Yes, we've got to create wealth, and we haven't been doing a very good job of that. We've got to understand that the rules have changed, and education and training are going to be very important to our social agenda, because some of the old ways of creating wealth in this province have not been working quite as they have in the past.

So I simply say in conclusion, because I'm sure I've taken more time than I ought to have taken, that as the member for Renfrew North, shame on the government for not reading the signs at an earlier point. But I say shame on the Tories for taking the view of: "Just blame everybody else. Forget the days when we were in office, running multibillion-dollar deficits, making investments in Suncor or announcing school policies that"—

Mr Stockwell: Who are these guys? I never met them before, for heaven's sake.

Mr Conway: I'm sure the member for Etobicoke West, Mr Stockwell, does not want to be connected to the Bill Davis, John Tory—even Frank Miller, you know, ran a \$3-billion deficit in this province on a \$30-billion expenditure plan, and Frank Miller understood why he had to do that: because he had obligations beyond just being an accountant.

We've got to provide leadership, but we've also got to provide hope. I've just spent this week travelling in places like Sarnia and Leamington and Windsor and Kitchener and Chatham, and you know what? One of the concerns that I have on the basis of that trip is that there is a growing despair and hopelessness on the part of too many people.

There was a wonderful editorial in the Windsor Star the other day which said essentially this: yes, times are tough and we've got ourselves into a bit of a fix, but we surely must understand that we can beat this problem by relying on the essential talent and optimism and can-do quality of the Ontario population. It was Franklin Roosevelt who said, in a different time but in a somewhat similar circumstance, that the only fear we have to fear is fear itself. We cannot let this province and this debate spiral downwards into some kind of sense of hopeless despair out of which there is no tomorrow.

I do not want to join the purveyors of doom who take

the view that all is lost, because while we've got some tough choices, we've got some very difficult issues with which to deal, as a Liberal, I am fundamentally optimistic and hopeful that we can change course, that we can find a way to create new wealth, that we can reconfigure our social safety net so that it is more efficient, more effective, more relevant to the demographic and social realities of the late 20th century and that we can provide a good environment for business, industry and labour to create the next generation of wealth.

Here endeth my observations. Thank you.

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): For a moment, I thought I was listening to the member for Renfrew North as sort of an opposition member in the New Brunswick Legislature. I don't know what his problem was with the Liberal government of, for example, New Brunswick, that has done an admirable job cutting its deficit and reducing in a very planned way. But of course, my colleague the member for Renfrew North, noted Liberal that he is, is quick to chastise our friends in the government because of their contradictions.

I, along with all members of the House, certainly listened to another Liberal whose problem is they have no direction, they have no policies, they have no plans. They can hurl stones, they can hurl insults, they can talk about moments in their past—and there were precious few of them, Mr Speaker—but the truth of the matter is, if they had any understanding of how every province in this country reacted three years ago, when the evidence was overwhelming that the growth in government had to be stemmed—Liberal governments came to that conclusion and have succeeded. We have a recent provincial election of a Liberal government to prove that. I don't know where the Liberals were thinking, why they're wandering in a wilderness without policies and responses.

I'm not here to chastise the government—

Mr Elston: Oh, yes you are.

1650

Mr Jackson: No, I'm not. I think that when you analyse the fact that there are some contradictions in the policies of this government, you can look at contradictions as a breach of faith from NDP ideology or you can look at these contradictions as a capacity to change. There's evidence in the Treasurer's budget that there is a capacity to change, that the Treasurer has changed some of his fundamental views. Now, I may not agree with all of those, but it's clear that an effort is being made.

We on our side of the House have put it on the record that we feel that the government should have reacted swiftly three years ago and put in a 0%, 1% or even as high as a 2% increase to the civil service in

terms of their salaries, not the 8% to 10% that was ultimately granted. They didn't take our advice, but at least they're making an effort now to try and undo the problems that were in part created by those rich, enhanced payments.

When I look at the average civil servant who's been calling my office, they say, "We'd rather have had a 0% increase over the last two years, or a 1% increase, like many of our neighbours"—like those of us in this Legislature. We've had a zero increase for a couple of years. We're not complaining.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): That's three years.

Mr Jackson: It's three years. Thank you, my colleague Mr Bradley. But the truth of the matter is that that's the experience their neighbours are feeling and that is what they wish now had happened, not to now have the cut and slash of 10,000 jobs.

Our party, and we attempt to do this in this motion, wants to try and focus on what are some of the problems that might occur from a social contract if it's not done in a responsible fashion. We're very concerned, for example, that the government's ability to horse-trade in these negotiations does not set in place some things that have a long-term negative impact to the growth of our province.

I want to give you an example. There is a fear, for example, that there are several unions who have on their agenda the further elimination of private sector interests in this province. That free enterprise, in a whole related field, whether it's in social services or in education, should not be eliminated: That's our position. This government has a historical record. There's a contradiction. If you embrace this contradiction, we would be the first to stand up and applaud the NDP government, and there was some small evidence of it in the Treasurer's budget.

For three years our caucus has said: "Stop attacking private day care centres in this province. They are providing quality service at limited cost to the taxpayers. The risk capital is all advanced by those operators." And yet this government, in its recent Treasurer's announcement, said that they were backing off their \$100-million commitment to expand non-profit day care facilities, because a third of the day care centres in this province are sitting half empty or almost fully empty.

So I wish to stand here and say to the Treasurer: "Spot on. I would have liked you to have made that decision three years ago, but you made that decision and I support that decision." There is room for the private sector to participate. They are very dedicated people, and that extension goes further.

We're about to lay off hundreds and hundreds of nurses in this province as a result of the government's

actions as announced by the Treasurer. How wonderful it would be if we had a system in place where we could encourage those nurses to harness their abilities and to go out and participate with the development of private home care services, for example. Why are we not encouraging teachers who are going to be laid off to harness their potential, their abilities and their skills and to provide those services in day care centres, where the public can afford to pay for them, where there is need? There is example after example, but there will be about 10,000 people laid off very shortly in the process of this government's quick reaction finally, their wake-up call to how serious the deficit growth has been in the last three years.

We in our party implore them to look at those opportunities for those civil servants, because they will not find jobs unless they look in the private sector. They're not going to move to another province and find work. They're not going to move down the hall and get another public service job. The only place for them to go, to contribute to Ontario society, is to participate with the private sector, not to stay on unemployment insurance, and for God's sake not to get on to our welfare roles unnecessarily.

So our party speaks to that issue, and in this motion we ask the government to consider those options closely. Be careful about your tradeoffs, that we don't start to structurally impede the development and the growth of private sector services as partners in finding solutions to ensure prosperity in our province.

I applaud my leader and my caucus for their diligence in maintaining a clear sense of vision with what we can do in this province to help people maintain their employment, to participate in prosperity and, in so doing, contribute to the entire future of our province.

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): I'm pleased to speak on Mr Harris's motion. I found it interesting in the preamble that Mr Harris recognizes that, "The Ontario economy is experiencing significant structural change," and acknowledges that, "The future wellbeing of all Ontarians, the maintenance of vital public services and the improvement of our standard of living depend on the ability of the province to attract new job-creating investment."

I found it interesting and I'm gratified that the leader of the third party has finally come to recognize the problems that this government has determined it will face and address through leadership and cooperation with the public and private sectors, indeed with all those hard-working Ontarians who put us into office in September of 1990 to redress the economic problems of the current recession. Those Ontarians knew that no matter what the provincial Liberals or federal Tories or indeed what the tax fighter was saying, Ontario did not have a balanced budget as the Liberals were wont to say, that federal monetary and trade policies were and

are not working and that there was no quick fix in provincial Tory proposals to slash spending and thereby undermine the public service and condemn the most vulnerable in Ontario to economic deprivation, condemn because the provincial Tories are incapable of innovative problem-solving.

I'd like to look at the leader of the third party's preamble in bits and pieces and tell you what it says to me.

Firstly, Ontario's economy is indeed experiencing significant structural change. Part of this is due to the impact of globalization and trade liberalization, but it is also due to the impact of federal high dollar, high interest, high unemployment and free trade policies of the last few years.

Free trade has accelerated those structural changes. A pre-free-trade-agreement study by the Ontario Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology showed that 74 Ontario industries employing 400,000 people would suffer under the federal Tories' free trade agreement, and suffer we did. Ontario has suffered the lion's share of the more than 511,000 jobs lost in Canada since 1989, and it's Ontario that's been deindustrialized by those not-so-distant Tory cousins of the leader of the third party who now in his motion acknowledges we are indeed experiencing structural change.

Those job losses will not come back at the end of this recession as they have in the past, because despite the 1989 federal government claims that the FTA would open US markets to Canadian manufacturers, the reality is that 9,407 Canadian companies declared bankruptcy in the first 10 months of 1990, up 25% from the same period of 1989. Some declared bankruptcy because they had not been able to maintain their debt load given the high interest rates. Exporters had been forced out of the US market because of the high dollar. Others were not able to compete with imports from the US, while still others who supplied imports to US subsidiaries and big Canadian companies were adversely affected by the relocation of these companies to the US.

The Canada-US free trade agreement has led to a withdrawal of US manufacturing branch plants along with related research and development facilities in Canada, and 75% of those branch plant closures happened in Ontario to Ontarians.

Yes, Mr Harris is correct to say that there are structural changes and Ontario has suffered, and it is not at all reassuring to know that federal government policy in regard to high interest rates, the dollar and trade made the effects of those changes all the worse for this nation and for this province.

1700

The opposition insists that other jurisdictions have also gone through recessions. Yes, they have, but global recession alone does not explain to Ontarians why the

recession began earlier for us, has lasted much longer and why the Americans, who experienced the same global situation, lost only one job for every four lost here in Ontario.

The leader of the third party also states that our future depends on the maintenance of vital public services, our ability to attract investment and to create jobs. How very astute. It's interesting that all that sounds so very, very familiar. It's precisely what the Premier, the Treasurer, the cabinet and the caucus of this government have been saying and working towards for the past two and a half years, and I might add, working towards strengthening the public and private sectors while the federal Tories were dismantling programs like unemployment insurance because the Americans don't like it; were introducing the GST because it was part of the Canada-US free trade agreement; and introducing Bill C-91, that federal drug patent legislation, that will add nearly \$100 million to the cost of health care for Ontario taxpayers.

I'd like to address the importance of maintaining those vital public services that Mr Harris is so concerned about, because we on this side of the House regard that as profoundly important. It is public sector workers who help us when we are most vulnerable: as children, in illness, as seniors. The public sector is also in many respects the engine of our progress and development as a society, and it is because of our commitment to public services and the jobs of the dedicated and talented people who deliver them that infuses and inspires the government's desire for a social contract.

Ontario must have decent, affordable, well-administered government services. This is the essence of the unwritten social contract among Ontarians. It represents the values we hold in common, values of mutual responsibility and respect, as the basis for citizenship and of a drive to ensure a strong economic base to allow every citizen to fulfil her or his potential. Quality public education, affordable health care, social and environmental support systems, public sector research and innovation programs, and modern infrastructure such as roads and sewers are all crucial factors in creating a context to support the Ontario economy and the quality of life of its citizens. It is this public sector we must protect as we manage a critical economic situation. It is a unique blend of community involvement and the professionalism of its public servants.

It is this government's firm conviction that the partners to the public sector social contract negotiations—the employees and the employer groups—have the depth of experience and the commitment to define more effective ways of working together to deliver more effective services, today and in the future. However, one of the realities we face as a government is that costs are increasing and revenues are weak, and with the drastic

cuts in federal transfer payments, about \$4.5 billion, the financial wolf is at the door. Ever-increasing borrowing on ever-increasing debt means, through the miracle of compound interest, decreasing services and increasing taxes, and as a result—there is absolutely no question about this—the longer we shrink from facing the threat to our public sector the more dangerous it will become.

To meet this challenge, the government is putting in place a three-part plan to deal with the debt. The first is expenditure control; the second, tax and other revenue measures; and the third, a social contract with the public sector.

The government's expenditure program amounts to about \$4 billion this year. This \$4-billion cut takes out as much spending as is possible without affecting large numbers of jobs. The vast majority, about 11,000, or a little over 1% of the workforce, can be absorbed through the normal process of attrition supplemented by improved provisions for voluntary exit.

In the next level of spending cuts, a further \$2 billion, it will be impossible to avoid the much more severe possibility of job loss and curtailment of services unless concerted action is taken. That's why this government has initiated a social contract. With goodwill, cooperation and mutual understanding, these negotiations can result in a social contract where public sector employees agree to certain payroll measures in return for not just increased job security, but for a greater participation in the design, delivery and restructuring of government services.

The government sees these negotiations as an important step towards restructuring the way government works. The scope of these talks is not driven solely by numbers, but by a real commitment to finding more cost-effective, more responsive ways of delivering high-quality services and keeping them affordable.

We have to change the way we do the business of the public sector. This can only be accomplished, in this government's view, by changing the manner in which we work with each other, both in this immediate challenge and into the future.

What does changing the system involve? Bringing the public sector employers, employees and their representatives into a more widely drawn circle of power, specifically greater openness and accountability of public sector administration; the establishment of effective and responsive mechanisms for restructuring work and reskilling the public sector workforce; a new partnership around capital investment decisions and reform of the collective bargaining framework.

By putting these issues on the table, the government is indicating its intention to ensure that the public sector continues, Mr Harris, to be a vital and dynamic instrument for meeting the accelerating challenges of social and economic change.

We are providing leadership. We refuse to shrink away from the challenges we found when we came into government. We have developed strategies to create jobs, invest in people through education and training, to preserve important public services like health care and education and protect the public sector by managing our finances. It's indeed a balanced approach. I know my colleagues, those who preceded me on the government benches, have already provided explanations regarding those programs and that those who follow will continue to expand on this theme. I am looking forward to hearing from them, and I thank you for this opportunity to participate in the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): I thank the honourable member for her participation in the debate. Further debate?

Mr Bradley: I wish to address the issue that's before us today, because it's certainly one of the compelling issues facing us in government and opposition: that of the economy and what to do about the economy in Ontario.

I think first of all what people are discovering is that one of the major issues out there, as far as the business community is concerned and anybody who has any money to invest—and that is certainly fewer people today than, say, five years ago—is the management of the provincial economy and the management of the province. What appears to be the case now is that people do not have confidence in the ability of Premier Rae, his cabinet and members of the government to adequately manage a difficult economic time, so the Premier has embarked upon rather drastic measures that one would never have anticipated would have come from an NDP government. What we have to do in this province, in terms of the private sector, is ensure that people have a good reason to invest in Ontario, to create the kind of climate that's necessary to have people retain what investment they have here and to choose Ontario over other jurisdictions at a time when the competition is extremely tough for the investment dollar.

I, in the Niagara region, and those others who represent the Niagara region, have seen very difficult economic circumstances facing our workers, people who have been employed for years in industries and businesses which traditionally have brought a lot of money to our area, have been good in terms of the style of life that they have brought to the people who have worked in those industries. We're seeing that disappear as the investment leaves Ontario and heads to other jurisdictions.

1710

That is why I have asked, for instance, that the Premier meet with the top officials of General Motors in Detroit—I've asked this for the last two years—to endeavour to convince them that Ontario is a place to

retain investment and to expand its opportunities. Instead, we have seen jobs disappear from the Niagara Peninsula with the closing of the foundry in St Catharines, and with the announcement that the axle plant would be lost in terms of a sale.

What is ironic is that as a result of the mismanagement of the province and the economy, this government is now in the position of demanding—and I hate to use the word in front of so many New Democrats, particularly those in the trade union movement—demanding concessions from the employees of the government and those in the greater public sector.

I can recall during the election campaign that many of the leaders of the unions which represent those people were encouraging them to vote for the New Democratic Party and against the other parties in the province. I stated at that time that I thought that those in the economy generally, whether in the private sector or the public sector, would benefit from a government which knew how to manage the economy and knew how to attract investment, that they would be better off in fact, that perhaps, philosophically, the leadership would disagree with a Liberal government or perhaps even a Conservative government, but that they would be better off because the economy would be better and we could all share in the benefits.

I mentioned yesterday my concern about the Ministry of the Environment. As a result of the cuts that have been ordered by the Premier and by the Treasurer in all ministries—the Ministry of the Environment, I hoped, would be expanding its activities and making itself even more efficient in terms of dealing with polluters, and would have the resources to do so; unfortunately, it does not.

One of the things I noted yesterday—and let me tell you, four years ago every newspaper in the province would have had a glaring headline; the first story on the local news would have featured this, whether the television media or the radio media—was the dismantling, in my view, of the Ministry of the Environment investigation and enforcement branch, or at the very least, the watering down. Today, there isn't a reporter who touches it, and the reason is that the economy seems to be the focus.

Again, I said to environmentalists and others concerned about the economy that the NDP may have a platform which sounds pro-environment, but their ability to deliver would be severely constrained by their lack of ability to manage the economy in this province.

I would like to zero in a bit on the Premier and the Treasurer in terms of the exercise they're engaged in today. I firmly believe that the Premier pulled the \$17-billion figure out of a hat. At no time was the deficit of this province going to be \$17 billion, but it certainly suited the purposes of the Premier to set it that high, to then engage in an exercise that he's engaging in today.

I don't think there's any doubt that it was creeping up above \$12 billion, perhaps \$13 billion, but this \$17-billion figure is a fictitious figure. It's a figure that is an absolutely worst-case scenario, and it's a setup, so that when they reduce the deficit to \$8 billion or \$9 billion, as I suspect might happen, then they will accept the credit of those who would say, "Well, they've cut the budget by \$8 billion, or \$9 billion. Isn't this a wonderful exercise on the part of the Premier and his ministers." I am saying that the Premier has taken a worst-case scenario and is predicating his plans on that worst-case scenario.

Second, we have the Premier and the Treasurer suggesting—particularly the Treasurer, in this case—that there are going to be a lot of taxes in the next budget. They suggest \$2 billion in new taxes. It floats out there. The Treasurer uses the word "revenues" because they have this governmentspeak that they use on the other side of the House.

My suggestion to this House is that we'll see nothing in the neighbourhood of \$2 billion in tax increases, but there will be some, and then they will explain to the population, and to those who always accept whatever the government says, that they have done a wonderful job by holding taxes down, when in fact at this time in our economy, in the midst of a recession, we should not be introducing any new taxes at this particular time.

It seems to me that if the Treasurer and his colleagues had listened to those of us in the opposition in their first year of office, they wouldn't have a problem that is as difficult as it is today. I recall standing in this very place as the then treasury critic of the Liberal Party in the official opposition, suggesting that they must go through, ministry by ministry, to examine all programs to determine whether they should be proceeding with them, which could be eliminated at that time, which could be delayed in terms of the implementation.

Instead, what happened was the Management Board chair and the Treasurer simply opened the vault and all the ministers went in with both hands to take money out of that vault, and as a result, they got themselves into a huge financial hole that the public service employees will have to pay for today.

It's unfortunate, and I think you would agree with me, Mr Speaker, sitting in the chair now, the member for Victoria-Haliburton, that in fact the government is so desperate for revenues today that it has lowered itself to casino gambling as its source of revenues. I am told by New Democrats who used to sit in the caucus that the person—and I'm talking years ago—who was most opposed to casino gambling was none other than Robert K. Rae, QC, as Rob Martin, the NDP candidate in the riding around London, the University of Western Ontario person, has to say, and he called for him to resign.

But there we are with the only solution being casino

gambling, and that's most unfortunate because I would have expected that of all the parties in the House, the party of Bill Temple, the NDP, the party of M.J. Coldwell and H.W. Herridge and Harold Winch, all of the icons of the past in terms of this kind of legislation, would have rejected casino gambling. But in desperation they're out there to extract the money from the poor and to invite into the province as a result, indirectly, the kind of crime that is associated with it.

Let me look at the ramifications, if I may briefly, of what the government is doing, because I think when people call for restraint, when people call for drastic cuts in expenditures, they have to know what it means. We all like to—

Interjection.

Mr Bradley: No. Those engaging in this kind of discussion somehow talk about restraint as though it won't have ramifications. I'm going to tell you, our health care system is going to show the great problems that will arise from this very soon as a result of the mismanagement and now this panic program where the Treasurer has a fire sale, where he's selling off assets that may be of value to the government and where they're cutting and slashing almost indiscriminately.

We're going to see schools crowded. We're going to see hospitals closing beds, as we are. We're going to see the most vulnerable people in our society being affected by the mismanagement of the economy that this government has engaged in.

At some time when I get an opportunity to speak further in another debate, I would like to explore what is happening, and every minister knows what is happening there, but I simply want to finish with a couple of quotes from people whom I've respected for a long time.

One is Michael Davison, a former colleague of mine in the Legislative Assembly, the NDP member for Hamilton Centre, and he says, "Five generations of my family have fought the good fight in this community over seven decades: three of us even stood for electoral office a total of 14 times." Then he goes on to say:

"I lay the blame for all this at the door of Bob Rae because he chose the option of an imperial premiership. He counts for everything. The decisions are made in his office, not in cabinet, caucus or the provincial council of the NDP. MPPs can't comment on anything more significant than the weather without it being approved by the Premier's office.

"For the good of the people of the province and the party, this has to stop and that means Bob Rae has to go as party leader and Premier."

I didn't say this, because I have not called for the resignation of the Premier, not at this point in time. This is an NDPer who says this.

Of course, Rob Martin, a former federal NDP candi-

date and professor of law at the University of Western Ontario said:

"The Rae government has betrayed its party and its party's principles and the people who have supported that party. He and his government have abandoned all pretence of acting on behalf of ordinary men and women."

He goes on to say, in conclusion, because the member for Halton Centre is waiting:

"My fear is that Rae and the arrogant crowd around him may be entering a Götterdämmerung phase. They may become increasingly aware that they have not the slightest chance of re-election and simply adopt a scorched-earth policy, determined to bring the temple down around all our ears."

1720

So I think I have—

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): You're choking on it.

Mr Bradley: Well, I'm choking on the fact that the government has mismanaged the economy so badly. But I would like to simply say that if you had only listened to us two years ago, you wouldn't be in this problem, and now you are reaping the results of your mismanagement of the economy.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I'm pleased to participate in this debate and particularly in following the points made by the member for St Catharines, with whom I couldn't agree more. I think that as we look around the province and hear discussions about the approach of this government with respect to economic issues, what we are hearing from people is a complete misunderstanding or non-understanding of why all of a sudden the economic scenario was presented showing Ontario in an economic crisis. I think that my colleague has indicated that there is a clear reason that people are faced with that conclusion, and that is that this government took them there.

When a Premier muses about the potential of a \$17-billion deficit if nothing else is done, and when the Treasurer approaches economic management with surprise plans for public service cuts and completely out of the blue places them on the table with no consultation with the partners involved, then it's very clear that the lack of confidence and the confusion is going to add very much to the public's unease about the management of this government.

The government brought forward two years ago a budget plan that it was clear—and the advice from this side of the House was that it was the wrong budget at that time.

Mr Bernard Grandmaitre (Ottawa East): They had a choice.

Mrs Sullivan: They had a choice and they chose to go with a plan that would not work. This year, in the

fiscal year just past, the government introduced a budget that built in no methods to introduce and to increase confidence in the managerial skills of the government. In fact, as a result of the failure of that budget, it had to bring changes in on two and more occasions. Indeed, the most recent change of course is the plan that was slapped on the table with respect to service cuts and the out-of-the-blue paper with respect to the social contract.

The \$17-billion supposed, proposed budget deficit and the need for cutbacks could not have come as a surprise to the government if the government had been doing its job. Those figures don't come from nowhere. The Treasurer must have known what was occurring to the revenue base and where the spending lines were out of control, and the Treasurer should have been on the ball and the Premier on the ball to get the internal house in order in the province rather than to simply turn the problem over to the municipal taxpayer and the board of education taxpayer, which is precisely what's happening, or to put hundreds and indeed thousands of people out of work.

One of the speakers, the member for Middlesex, talked about, I think in a speech prepared in some ministry or other, probably Treasury, that we have to change the way the public sector does business. I'd like to give the example of the kinds of changes that were introduced in Quebec and how they approached in a meaningful way the components of realignment of expenditure and public administration as they looked at the same implications that we are facing here: the industrial restructuring, the technical and technological change and indeed the lower revenues at the provincial level. They developed a plan, they introduced consultation as that plan was being put together and they made a plan public as part of a budgetary process and they had feedback and a buy-in to that plan.

Their first objective was to simplify governmental organization and structures to improve their efficiency. Many issues were included in that and many approaches, and I'll just give you some: first, to re-examine the government organization, to reduce the number of ministries and agencies and eliminate duplication. What we saw here was an increase in the number of ministers the government appointed.

Their second step was to simplify access to government services by creating one-stop counters where possible.

The third step was to privatize activities, agencies and crown corporations when operations can be carried out more economically by the private sector. In that same area they are moving to reassess all advisory bodies and councils in order to look forward to their abolition or merger with other agencies in the same sector.

Those are the exact kind of steps that should have been taken here. That's just one area Quebec looked at. They also looked at and will be implementing a public

sector management method that promotes management accountability and quality of public servants. In this area Quebec will be making a serious attempt and indeed has a plan to increase the responsibility and accountability of managers to set multi-year budget targets for ministries, to establish a new approach to gradually have the public sector compete with or complement the private sector to determine the most cost-effective ways to deliver government services.

There are other areas. The Quebec government intends to improve the cost of products and services on a continuing basis, to stabilize the overall remuneration and improve the flexibility of work organization modes. This is an area that this government could well have been interested in. Some of the areas which Quebec is involved in here include a plan which is to reduce management personnel by 20% over three years and other staff levels by 12% over three years, except in the networks, which must develop staff level reduction plans by September 30, 1993. In all of this human resources area there was an opportunity for a planning time and a consistency in the approach that was more than simply introducing a chaotic and unintegrated, disintegrated system.

I heard the member for Middlesex and several other speakers today—and I'm having to speak quickly because I'm running out of time—pay tribute to the public sector and indicate that the government of the day considers the public sector to be highly professional and so on. Well, in fact I'm very concerned about that, because I don't believe this government has the confidence in the public sector that allows it to reach that conclusion. They've given evidence that they don't trust senior civil servants in many areas and, further, they've inserted their own partisan people in the highest positions in the civil service that creates a politicization that is difficult.

But I want to turn to a quote I've discovered made by Michael Decter, the Deputy Minister of Health, who is being seconded to the so-called social contract discussions. One of the issues that Decter spoke to, in the situation as it had occurred when he was involved in government in Manitoba, was the issue in fact of the easy target of the public service.

He indicated that the easiest target of all for the government to go after on any occasion, if there is a deficit-reduction plan or alteration in approach to spending or budgetary planning—the easiest approach, the most simple approach, is that of the public service. It's very easy to feed on ill will that can be added to by government action and by government members' statements about the inactivity, or whatever other criticism wants to be made, to make the public service an easy target for change.

This entire approach of this government is one of mismanagement. The government speaks of partnerships

when what it clearly wants is silent partners. It speaks of job creation when jobs continue to disappear. There is no one in this province who has the confidence that this government has the ability to manage the economy and to do the job that's necessary today.

1730

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for her participation in the debate. Further debate? The honourable member for Nickel Belt.

Hon Mr Laughren: I've enjoyed the debate this afternoon; a lot of good suggestions and comments, and a few mean ones, but I take those in the spirit in which they're given and, in some cases, from the source. But I do give the leader of the third party credit for putting this motion before the House and allowing us to have a more fulsome debate on this issue, because question period can hardly do this issue service.

The issue I'm talking about of course is the attempt by this government to finally, as a government, address a problem which other governments have failed to do. We do face a very significant challenge in this province; namely, a deficit of almost \$17 billion.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): Did you get that figure right this time, Floyd?

Hon Mr Laughren: Well, it's almost \$17 billion. That's correct. A deficit of that size in the future will unquestionably threaten our ability to protect services and create jobs and attract investment in this province. We simply must deal with it.

I believe that all members have indicated an awareness that we must deal with that problem. There's no question that we have to deal with the deficit. Where we part company, from time to time, with people across the floor is on how we would deal with that. The Conservative Party has a very clear position that it would concentrate on expenditures: leave taxes alone and slash expenditures. I worry about that. Not only would the Conservatives reduce expenditures; they would eliminate the deficit completely in three years. I'm waiting to hear which programs they're going to eliminate and slash, which hospitals are going to close, which roads they're not going to build, what investments they're not going to make in this province, because I want to tell you, people out there in the province are sick and tired of hearing phoney promises on "No tax increases." They don't believe you any more than we believe you. It's a simple fact.

Interjection: Look at George Bush.

Hon Mr Laughren: So let us not kid each other. Let's not kid the troops. George Bush tried it and it didn't work. Ronald Reagan reduced taxes and it didn't work. Now we've got the Conservatives in Ontario pretending that we can have a wonderful Ontario by slashing programs willy-nilly all across the province, threatening jobs and services in community after

community, and they won't raise any taxes at all. Then, however, the leader of the third party goes on to say, and he said it in his speech this afternoon, that under a Conservative regime no public servant would lose his job unless there was a private sector job opportunity for him. At the same time, however, he would restructure the public sector.

I don't know what the leader of the third party was smoking this afternoon, because I want to tell you, that's not even remotely possible. With unemployment running at almost 10%, the leader of the third party is telling us that he's going to reduce the size of the public sector and guarantee everybody who no longer has a job in the public sector a job in the private sector. I don't know how in the world the leader of the third party expects to have any credibility whatsoever. Every time you try to suck and blow at the same time, you lose a little more credibility, and you have little enough to start with. Keep that in mind.

No one takes any satisfaction in going through this exercise of reducing expenditures and raising taxes, but we are determined to do that. It is simply not possible to sustain the level of services that we have out there now and the level of compensation in the public sector into even the near future. We simply must address the problem, and we think we are doing it in the fairest way possible. We are doing it in an open, consultative, fair-minded way, fairer than any other government in Canada has ever done, certainly fairer than any government in this province has ever done, because we know what the solution would be from the Liberal Party and from the Conservative Party. It would be "Bang, bang, bang," to quote the leader of the third party. Bang, bang, bang, the legislation's in, no negotiations whatsoever.

At least give us credit for setting up a social contract table where we try very hard to fashion agreement with the people out there who work so hard for this province. Simply bashing people in the public sector accomplishes nothing. It accomplishes nothing.

I know you don't believe in the free collective bargaining process. Why would you at least not give it a try? Why not try to work it out in a fair and open process?

We believe very strongly that the key to getting through this whole question of dealing with the deficit and expenditures is to have a balanced approach. That's why we said we are going to reduce expenditures by \$4 billion this year, we are going to set up a social contract in which we negotiate compensation in the public sector and we're going to increase taxes as well.

Now, I know there are people who don't believe we should increase any taxes. I guess if you believe the deficit should be reduced, if you believe that, then you're saying, "Take all of the problem out on the hides of the people who work for this province or the people

who deliver the services that they deliver." That's what you're really saying: "Take it all out on the hides of the people who get services from this province or the people who deliver the services." That's exactly what you're saying, and we're saying, "No, no, that's not a fair and balanced approach," because there are people out there in this province who can afford to pay more in taxes. They'll never admit that, of course.

We believe that what we're going to bring in is a fair and balanced approach to resolving this problem. I don't expect the opposition parties to like it. It's a tough thing to do in opposition, to make decisions that offer up alternatives. I can remember the leader of the Liberal Party in this province standing on her feet when she became leader, with enormous support from all her caucus colleagues, and saying, "I am going to be a leader with a difference; I'm going to propose alternatives." That was some time ago—a year and a half ago, was it? A year and a half ago? We are waiting for a single alternative. She has offered up none; none whatsoever. One day the Liberals are on their feet saying, "Spend more money." The next day they're on their feet saying, "Your deficit's too high." The next day they're on their feet saying, "Don't cut these expenditures." The next day they're on their feet saying, "No more tax increases." What an incredible hodge-podge of policy the Liberals represent in this province. It is truly beyond belief.

[Applause]

Hon Mr Laughren: I'm glad to see the leader of the third party back in the House and applauding. I don't think he's applauding me, but at least applauding the idea that the Liberals are out to lunch when it comes to putting forth any alternatives.

But I would say to the leader of the third party, before he gets too hard on the Liberals, that we anticipate him coming forward with his alternatives on the programs he will slash all across this province, the programs he will slash in order to eliminate the deficit in three years. I want to tell the leader of the third party, people in this province are sick and tired of people just standing up and mouthing these inanities and not explaining how they're going to achieve what they say.

Mr Harris: That's what you were going to do. I'm saying, no, no, slow this down a little bit.

Mr Owens: No deficit in three years is looney tunes.

Mr Harris: Well, you're going from \$17 billion to \$10 billion in one year. I'm better than you.

Hon Mr Laughren: Well, the deficit this year is \$12 billion, it's not \$17 billion, in 1992-93.

Mr Harris: You told us it's going to be \$17 billion, that you were starting at 17. Oh, you're only going from 12 to 10.

1740

Hon Mr Laughren: Well, the leader of the third party obviously has no idea of what he's talking about or he'd know that the deficit, the year we just ended, is about \$12 billion. I thought he would know that by now.

What we are saying is that we are going to reduce expenditures from what they would be in 1993-94 by \$4 billion on program expenditures; we are going to find \$2 billion at the social contract table; and we're going to raise revenues through taxation and other measures. I want to make it perfectly clear to everyone in this Legislature that that's what is not negotiable on the social contract table, because I've heard other people imply that this is the case. The tax package is not negotiable at the social contract table. That must be clearly understood, and we believe that our partners out there understand that very well.

Mr Speaker, I know that time is running short and I want to leave the leader of the third party time to wind up on his own motion.

What we're saying is that the expenditure control package is broadly spread all across the province. We took a year. We didn't take a weekend or a month; we took a year to arrive at that final package of expenditure reductions of \$4 billion, and we agonized over every single one of those expenditure reductions. We think they're fair and broadly based all across the province.

The social contract table was set up for the sole purpose of protecting jobs and services all across this province. That's the purpose of the social contract table, and we hope very much that it will work, because we think there would be enormous benefits both for the public sector employees and for the people who receive the services they deliver.

It should go without saying, but it doesn't—it seems that it needs to be reinforced—that this government did not create this problem. Fairminded people understand that we inherited a structural deficit of enormous size. We inherited a deficit. But I can tell you, we are the first government that is determined to deal with this problem and to do so in a fair and evenhanded way.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Nickel Belt for his participation in the debate. Further debate?

Mr Stockwell: I think it's important to, first off, deal with the issue that the Treasurer spoke about with respect to integrity.

I think that this House, this party, this province, are sick of listening to lectures from this government about integrity, and political integrity. You've long since lost your virginity on integrity, Mr Treasurer; it's long since gone. I will just make note of a couple of items.

Before I deal with the social contract, let's talk about the government integrity. Let's talk about An Agenda for People. I'm sorry that this keeps cropping up, but

this is an example of this government's integrity. It hasn't got any. It's got no integrity from page 1 through to page 11 of this particular document.

On page 11, this government, which knew it was in a recession when it wrote this piece of trash, outlined exactly what its revenues and deficit would be. Do you know, in September 1990, when you admitted we were in a recession within this very document, you said your revenues would be \$44.5 billion. You know what? They're nearly quite around \$44.5 billion. You know what you said your expenditures would be? You said \$44.5 billion. This government said it would have a balanced budget. Don't lecture any one ever again on political integrity and honesty with the public, because if anyone hasn't got any, it's this government.

To move on, this particular Treasurer or Finance minister, whatever they're calling him these days—it's tough to get a fix on exactly what political party and where on the political spectrum you people fall. You came in telling us you were social democrats. Today, the Finance minister speaks like a fiscal conservative. So you must fall someplace in the middle, which makes you Liberal, and they got kicked out three years ago.

The orders of the day speak very directly from our motion about the social contract. Let's talk about this social contract. First and foremost, before we get into this, if we had been in government in 1990, we would not be in this mess. We wouldn't be in this mess because we never would have brought in such a profound mistake as your 1991 budget. Make that very clear. We would never have run an \$11-billion deficit; we would never have increased salaries by 13%; we would never have increased the public payroll at the rate you increased it. We as a government would not be in this pickle. You're in it because of shortsighted fiscal mismanagement, led, I might add, by the ex-mover and shaker of the Waffle party within the NDP, our favourite Treasurer, who now looks more like Frank Miller than Mr Waffle.

This particular order of the day talks about the social contract, this social contract that you claim to be making with your partners. Let me be very clear: The people you call your partners are calling you a lot of things today, but "partner" is not one of them. They're calling you these things because you're breaking very trusted promises and vows that you took when you went into government, when you wedded these particular associations, and that you're finding so difficult to bring forward today. The social contract is a problem because the government was elected by the people it's cutting today.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): If you don't have anything to say, you just say it over and over again, louder and louder, and hope people think you've got something to say.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Wiseman's heckling; he con-

tinues to heckle. I love to hear you heckle, because it reminds me of the four dumps that are being put in your riding. Keep talking. The only thing you'll know about is the bottom of that dump, because that's where your career's going to be in two and a half years.

This particular social contract is dealing with issues that should have been dealt with at least two, three, four, maybe five years ago. The difficulty that this government finds itself in was self-made. It was made by bad fiscal management. It was made by bad decision-making, and it was made because you discovered that all the rhetoric, the highest, most pompous and arrogant rhetoric that you offered on this side of the House, wasn't worth a tinker's damn when you got the levers of power.

What we offer is a clear and unobstructed alternative. When we talk about reductions, we give concrete examples. I know there are people who don't agree with them. I know there are some members, such as the Minister of Housing, who would be quite dismayed when she reads them. I understand that. But they are concrete, legitimate action plans outlined by this caucus. We have put it out for public consumption: We have heard deputations; we understand their concerns. It's there for you to read.

If you choose not to read it, that's simply not our problem. If you're going to make the suggestion to the public service that all this party cares about is cutting back public employees and cutting off welfare recipients, it's both irresponsible and politically corrupt. It's unfair and not worthy of a government in this province.

The partners of this government are in trouble because of this government. Municipalities are faced with half a billion dollars in cuts. Why? Because you mismanaged. To add insult to injury, Mr Speaker, they also had to put supplementary tax bills out to the people because you couldn't even tell them before they set their tax rates. Now they've got to go back to the people and explain that the hard work that they put in, the diligence and the effort that they put in to bring in zero increases is all for naught, because you're paying the piper on the backs of the municipalities, something you condemned the Liberals for and that you're now becoming professionals at. Unacceptable, unbelievable that you should do that to municipalities.

1750

The municipalities are going to have to do this and the municipalities are going to have to raise the revenue, from where? I recall that when you, as an opposition party, spoke of municipal taxes, each and every one of you spoke of municipal taxes and you explained how regressive they were, that they were patently unfair because they were not based on the ability to pay. Who's paying for your fiscal mismanagement? Who's shouldering the blame? The same municipal taxpayer you claimed was being unfairly harassed by previous

governments because it's not based on ability to pay and is regressive.

Municipalities can ill afford it. Passing on your debt crisis to them is not dealing with the issue. It's irresponsible government from an irresponsible cabinet. It's unacceptable and they're announcing their concern publicly.

The mayor of North York, included in his tax release—and I'm certain some of the members will know—we'll call it the Bob Rae tax hike, his supplemental increase, and he should because you're the people who are foisting these problems on the municipalities.

What really ticks you off is that you complained for the three years that I've been here about the federal government cutting your transfer payments. What are you doing? Exactly the same thing. You're not shouldering responsibility. You're passing the buck and you're passing it on to those who can least afford it.

Now we get to the social contract. Now we're going to find out what Bob Mackenzie's going to do when he's going to have to vote in favour of legislating the brothers and sisters back to work. We're going to have to find out what Randy Hope's going to do, when he can still see the blisters from the picket signs that he carries, crossing a picket line of people who are opposed to this government's wage restraint and rollback, which you had, as part of your constitution, etched in stone. It must have been sandstone because this has disappeared.

We talk about the Premier drawing a line, a line in the water, a line that doesn't exist. The unions are trapping you. They're trapping you in the most basic trick of all. They're unloading their big cards, their big cannons. They're saying to you: "We're going to strike. We're not coming to the table. We won't listen." The only alternative that you have in negotiations with people who won't even come to the table is to tell them, "We're going to legislate you back to work." That is your trump card. You have no choice. That's the only choice you have. If the Treasurer thinks that this—

Mr Mammoliti: You're the alternative.

Mr Stockwell: We are the alternative. We are the alternative and the last poll I saw, sir, in Don Mills, we were the clear alternative. The last poll I saw, the Liberals were even, the NDP had lost one, and we were up one. Those are the kinds of polls that tell this government how well it is respected and who's in front.

My goodness, they can't get their deposit money back and they want to start heckling; 8% makes a lot of noise these days, doesn't it?

Mr Bradley: What about Michael Davison?

Mr Stockwell: I wanted to get through the social contract before I talk about him. I will.

Your last option and your only option: Unions don't

come to tables when you want to roll back their wages. Unions don't come to tables when you want to cut the payroll. When you want to cut the number of employees, they don't come to tables. If they're going to threaten not to come, you're going to have to legislate. You're going to have to tell them you're preparing to legislate, then they come to the table and then you begin to negotiate.

The proof is in the pudding. We'll see. We'll see in a few weeks. We'll see who was right. We'll see who was right about the dump sites. We'll see who was right about the deficit in the first year. We'll see who's right about your debt as you accumulate it. It seems to me that you have all the answers before the fact and after the fact; you couldn't be any more wrong than you were. It's incredible how wrong this government is. It's incredible how wrong you are on fiscal issues, on personal issues, and how you sell out, and I don't have to go too far.

Today, you sold out on casino gambling. The next step is that you'll take direct deposits for the chips from welfare cheques. That's how low this government has sunk.

It's not just the two opposition parties that are saying this about the government. It's not just us. The public out there are saying it and your own party is saying it. Your own party is talking about you in the same terms. They're talking about you having no credibility. They're talking about you having no integrity. They're talking about you that you're selling out. They're talking about you behind me now. They're talking about you in the newspapers. Mr Michael Davison, a former member—

Mr Mammoliti: You're the alternative. You.

Mr Stockwell: We are. We are the alternative. The member for Downsview has seen the light, Mr Speaker. Get another desk up here.

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: Yorkview, Downsview, I'm sorry. Get one for Downsview too, what the heck. Incoming dippers, load 'em up.

Mr Davison says:

"I lay the blame for all this at the door of Bob Rae because he chose the option of an imperial premiership. He counts for everything. The decisions are made in his office, not in cabinet, caucus or the provincial council of the NDP. MPPs can't comment on anything more significant than the weather without it being approved by the Premier's office."

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): That's a lie.

Mr Stockwell: If it's a lie, you're calling one of your card-carrying members a liar, so not only are you fighting with us, you're fighting with your own membership.

"Mr Robert K. Rae...Government's Arrogance Has

Fundamentally Corrupted Our Public Life.” This was written by Mr Rob Martin. He says, “No government has so rigorously and so effectively politicized the province’s public service.” Mr Martin goes on to say: “The only thing left to do with this government is ask them to resign, demand they step down. They’ve ruined their own ethics, they’ve ruined the government’s fiscal policies, they’ve ruined jobs and lives and careers of people in this province with fiscal mismanagement and in most cases socialist pap.”

If this particular order of the day, if this specific opposition day were put out for full public debate, if it were put out for a full public vote, the vast majority of Ontarians would support this. They’ve lost any trust in you. They’ve lost any hope in you. They’re asking you to change. They’re asking you to redirect your thoughts. They’re asking you to read the government party policies that come out of this caucus. They’re asking you to at least become a little more like us.

I’m saying the public out there has had it. They’re fed up. There’s no level of integrity, and the fiscal mismanagement is unmatched by any government in the history of this province.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Harris has moved opposition day motion number 1. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion the nays have it.

Call in the members: five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1759 to 1804.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Harris has moved opposition day motion number 1. All those in favour of the motion, please rise one by one.

Ayes

Arnott, Brown, Caplan, Carr, Cleary, Conway, Cunningham, Curling, Daigeler, Elston, Eves, Grand-maître, Harnick, Harris, Henderson, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), Marland, McClelland, McLean, Miclash, O’Neil (Quinte), Poole, Runciman, Ruprecht, Sterling, Stockwell, Sullivan, Tilson, Turnbull, Villeneuve, Wilson (Simcoe West), Witmer.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise one by one.

Nays

Abel, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Carter, Charlton, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Coppen, Dadamo, Farnan, Ferguson, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes, Haeck, Hampton, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Hope, Huget, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Kormos, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard, Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martel;

Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O’Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Rizzo, Silipo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Wark-Martyn, Waters, Wessenger, White, Wildman, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Winninger, Wiseman, Wood, Ziemba.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes being 33 and the nays being 64, I declare the motion lost.

It now being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning, Thursday, May 6, at 10 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1808.

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No. 15

N° 15

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 6 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 6 mai 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



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Thursday 6 May 1993

The House met at 1001.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

EASTERN ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Cleary moved resolution number 4:

That, in the opinion of this House, since the government of Ontario has not adequately addressed the effects of the recession on employment opportunities in eastern Ontario; and

Since over 3,000 jobs have been lost in the Cornwall area during the past two and a half years; and

Since the Ontario Ministry of Labour cited the local employment rate to be between 30% and 40%; and

Since an estimated 40% of Cornwall's population is dependent upon some form of social assistance; and

Since the NDP government reneged on a 1990 commitment to relocate a government agency, branch or ministry to the Cornwall area; and

Since the NDP government of Ontario reneged on a 1990 commitment to construct a substance abuse treatment centre in the city of Cornwall; and

Since Cornwall was completely overlooked in the Ontario Development Corp's most recent announcement of job creation loans worth more than \$5 million; and

Since the government of Ontario announced in 1990 that the city of Cornwall would benefit from the relocation of an Ontario ministry office; and

Since construction of a new government of Ontario building will begin in the city of Cornwall shortly; and

Since the government of Ontario building has the potential to accommodate a ministry;

The government of Ontario should therefore act immediately to create new and permanent jobs for the Cornwall area by locating one of the three recently announced crown corporations in the government of Ontario building in Cornwall.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Mr Cleary moves ballot item number 5. Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): Time and time again I have stood in the Legislature attempting to impress upon the Premier and the NDP government the economic situation in my riding.

It is no secret that the Cornwall and area economy is in a serious predicament. Every day the effects of the recession are felt on the retail community: people without jobs, even our school children and now our students looking for work. In fact it was so bad in the area that a special committee has been formed from the

school boards, the children's aid society and local individuals and community leaders. They call themselves the Vision Committee. They want to make sure that there's no duplication of services and they get the best value for every dollar they spend.

Of course I appreciate that our area is not alone in feeling the effects of the recession. I might point out the Premier's recent decision to cancel ministry locations for other areas of the province, namely, Windsor, Brantford, Chatham and Kingston.

The consolation prize for cancelling these decentralization projects and wiping out the opportunities is a \$100-million special economic fund to be shared by these affected communities. Being well aware of the impact of job losses, I feel for each of the communities, but the truth of the matter is that if any region in Ontario should have a special economic development fund, it is the Cornwall area.

The statistics quickly prove that over 20 manufacturing plants have closed in the past 36 months while 3,000 jobs were lost, unemployment has soared to 30% and 40% of the population relies on some kind of social assistance. Many of these are older workers, members who went into a plant when they came out of school. Many of them are over 55 years of age.

The bad part of the whole thing is that under the present regulations for the program for older worker adjustment, POWA, on account of the small numbers in the plants, they do not even qualify to take advantage of that. Then we had another plant, BCL, that closed. Now it's in its fourth year and these employees do not even have their severance packages yet.

We have the other environmental issues, a political agenda that affected our pulp and paper industry. I know it's not the only pulp and paper industry that's affected—there are others in Ontario too—but at least our local people have been trying to get a meeting with the Premier and the Ministry of Environment and Energy, and to date they have not been successful. It is mandatory that this situation be acted on now to restore growth and renewal in the community.

Over the past two and a half years I've made several requests to this government to respond to the unique and desperate situation in the Cornwall area. I have made a motion to combat cross-border shopping through the reduction of provincial taxes. Two of the key cross-border attractions are gasoline and cigarettes. Just five minutes away, you can purchase gasoline at 95 cents a gallon and cigarettes at a small percentage of what you would pay in Ontario.

Our local service station operators and our local corner stores have been devastated by this. I know in

the upcoming budget the Premier's eyeing to increase taxes on both these goods and will make the problem even worse. Not only that; it will hit the agricultural community and our tobacco growers.

I have sought the reintroduction of the Ontario Development Corp interest-free loan program as an incentive for business to locate in eastern Ontario. Every week I am told by businesses of all the advantages they could take advantage of if they were to locate just a few minutes away in the United States and also am told about some of the advantages they could have if they located in Quebec.

I have also attempted to ensure a healthy investor working climate by supporting amendments to the NDP's new labour legislation. We are just in the midst of losing another plant to the province of Quebec. This plant came to Cornwall over five years ago. They had a well-trained workforce, had won awards and were making plans for the future. Just by coincidence, after Bill 40 became law, they suddenly announced that they were going back to Quebec.

I also pressed for the eastern Ontario economic development program funding to be unfrozen, to name only a few of the measures I have pursued.

Mr Speaker, at this point I'd like to move that the provincial government create new and permanent jobs for the area by locating one of the three new crown corporation offices in Cornwall.

1010

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville):

I am very pleased to fully support my colleague the member for Cornwall's private member's motion to stimulate the economy of eastern Ontario, and particularly that of Cornwall and surrounding area.

I will list you some of the businesses and the opportunities that have shut down in the last three years, and it's astonishing. We have jobs created, 154; jobs lost, 2,210; layoffs, 440. So we have total jobs lost in the last three years of 2,650 or almost 12% of the entire workforce of Cornwall and area—an absolute travesty. These were not jobs in the \$20- and \$25-an-hour range; these were a lot of manufacturing jobs in the salary range of \$10 to \$15, \$16 per hour.

These are the jobs that are lost and they're lost for good, and I'll list some of them: December 1992, Courtaulds, 360 jobs gone; Dominion Textiles, June 1992, 350 jobs gone; Domtar, laid off 150 people, December 1991; Combustion Engineering, October 1990, 200 jobs gone; Amoco Fabrics, 200 jobs gone, July 1990; BASF, Cornwall, 150 jobs gone, May 1990; Courtaulds Films, 240 jobs gone, October 1989. The list goes on, a full page of jobs that no longer are available. Something must be done.

I will cite you, the main employer in Cornwall is Domtar, a pulp and paper manufacturing company that

has just announced that it will be spending some \$60 million to retool and revamp its paper-making process to recycle cardboard boxes into fine paper. Congratulated by the government of Ontario—this is great—"The Minister of the Environment, the Honourable Howard Hampton, congratulates Domtar Inc on the development of a new process that recycles old cardboard boxes into high-quality fine papers."

Sounds real good. The bad news is on the very next day the government of Ontario announced an absolute and total removal of chlorines in the paper-making process, something that has got the attention of city council and of Domtar Fine Papers.

I will cite you a letter and it's addressed to the Honourable Bud Wildman, Minister of Environment, and it comes from not only management but from union people within the Domtar conglomerate:

"As part of the new union-management working relationship at the Cornwall mill of Domtar Specialty Fine Papers, we are very concerned with the economic impact of the draft MISA regulations. The Cornwall mill has already agreed to install secondary treatment at a cost of \$55 million by the year 1995, which will bring the mill into compliance with federal and provincial regulations on BOD and toxicity. However, we believe that some of the additional provincial requirements under MISA are unnecessary for environmental protection, unjustifiably restrictive and likely to threaten the continued existence of the mill due to the additional capital requirement of \$75 million."

This was announced by the Ministry of Environment. These requirements were announced within a day or two after Domtar had announced an almost \$60-million investment to recycle used cardboard. Domtar and its union-management team believe that this is absolutely unnecessary. They are quite prepared to meet the requirements as set out by the federal government. They feel, and I'll cite again: "We see no scientific justification for imposing a goal of zero AOX by the year 2002. Compliance will require over \$40 million." It goes on with some technical information.

Well, there are 1,000 jobs at Domtar, and this government in its overzealous requirement above and beyond what the industry says is not required, what the federal government says is unreasonable, indeed, what is being required by the Ministry of Environment and Energy in Ontario, could create absolute havoc. Can you imagine another 1,000 people in the Cornwall area to be laid off permanently?

It will cost absolutely nothing to this government to simply adopt the same rules on the environment as are presently being enforced by the federal government, and that's all that the Domtar union-management team is asking: to maintain the capital that will be invested and to maintain those very important jobs in the area where

I reside and where many of my constituents go to work, whatever jobs are available.

Smuggling was touched on by my colleague from Cornwall, a major problem. The cost of cigarettes and gas has made it very, very easy for residents of the area to travel across the bridge—it takes about two minutes if there's no lineup—and obtain gas at about half the price on Akwesasne, which is a native reserve between the state of New York and the province of Ontario; cigarettes the same thing and booze. There is a big, big business. Organized crime is involved and it's very much hurting the economy of the area.

I attended a meeting last Friday, very concerned people, again, in the Cornwall area but this time it's a little bit west of Cornwall in the riding I represent, Highway 16, a major artery from the international bridge at Johnstown leading from New York state to the capital of our country, Ottawa.

Highway 16 some 15 years ago was prepared for being a four-lane limited access road, and in so doing, the government of the day—and it happened to be the Tories—expropriated all the land required and built the one lane of a potential and intended four-lane highway, a very dangerous situation in that the engineering and the layout of this one lane of a potential four-lane highway is now taking two-way traffic.

We have had over 40 deaths on that highway in the last number of years, and you, Mr Speaker, coming from the Ottawa area, avoid Highway 16 on the weekend. Friday, Saturday and Sunday it's an absolutely intolerable road. We need improvements. We need them now. If it has to be a toll road, so be it. People are prepared to cover the cost. However, lives must be saved.

The area, particularly south of the Rideau River to Highway 401, is absolutely terrible and it must be addressed and must be addressed now. Most of the work regarding engineering has been completed. Well over 95% of expropriation had been completed quite some time ago. We need action. We need pavement. We need another lane, most definitely.

Fuel ethanol will be an industry of the future. It's a green industry. I have been promoting it since I have been elected to this chamber. It is finally now coming to fruition but not coming very rapidly. My colleague from Cornwall is also very supportive of the project.

We have a group of farmers, known as the Seaway Valley Farmers Energy Co-operative, working very well together. They will have state-of-the-art processing of this product. It will be good for the environment. Eastern Ontario is a natural in that we have a very concentrated livestock industry and a very heavy grain production industry, two of the basic requirements of a fuel-ethanol-type production facility.

1020

St Lawrence Parks Commission operates out of my riding, primarily headquartered at Morrisburg. They have been cut back by over \$1 million in their budget for the coming year. For every available seasonal job at the St Lawrence Parks Commission, we have 15 or more applicants. That means that 14 people go without a job for every job that is assigned or given to seasonal employees, seasonal workers at St Lawrence Parks Commission. That, I think, gives you an idea of the type of economic despair that we have in southeastern Ontario.

Again, I think the Ministry of Environment and Energy must look again at its requirement of eliminating chlorine in the paper production facility by the year 2002; I believe the minister must, and must do it now, because this may well completely eliminate the \$60 million to recycle used cardboard and would also shut down the plant. Again, we're talking of 1,000 jobs. I believe my colleague from Cornwall probably knows more about that plant, because I think at one time he was an employee there, and he may want to touch on that as he summarizes.

I don't think I need to emphasize a great deal more. Eastern Ontario has been forgotten. Somehow or other, agriculture has always been the mainstay, but those offshoots of agriculture are having some very, very difficult times. I'll cite you another example where a small cheese processing plant under the auspices of the department of health attempted to close down the sale of warm, fresh cheese curd. It doesn't make any sense, but this is the kind of—

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): That has been looked after.

Mr Villeneuve: It's been looked after, but thank you for bringing it to our attention, because the bureaucrats are running wild; they're running uncontrolled. If this government has more of its say—and Bill 40 is part of putting the fox in charge of the henhouse, and that is what's occurring.

Again, my colleague spoke of a company that came to the Cornwall area from Quebec to get away from the type of very, very difficult labour legislation in the province of Quebec. Well, what do we have here now? We have even more restrictive and more negative labour laws in Ontario; the same company going back from whence it came, back to the province of Quebec, to get away from the likes of Bill 40. We will see more and more of this. We must take governments out of creating the artificial hoops and barriers that they are so good at, to interfere with the normal progress of business.

The implementation of this type of legislation you can attempt to camouflage by using every trick in the book—NAFTA, free trade, the GST; I'll tell you, the worst offender is the labour laws that have recently come into this province. If we continue with that kind

of government interference, we will have no choice but to take a back seat with an economy that will not restart. We keep saying we're on the verge of coming back to normal in Ontario. Well, we're not ever going to come back to normal as what we knew five or more years ago from business with this type of government and this type of legislation.

In summarizing, and I've probably taken a little more time than I wanted to, but the problem is so absolutely major in the area that I and my colleague from Cornwall come from. We have had some difficulty in getting to meet the Premier and cabinet officials. I have had the opportunity of meeting on several occasions, as my colleague from Cornwall has, and they have been sympathetic and they have provided some funding through the special group that was recently formed. My colleague Mr Cleary and I attended, and I think they will be addressing corrective measures.

But basically it's a Band-Aid remedy. We are not addressing the major problem, which is jobs. When parents go to work, their children feel much more confident, and we would not have a situation that is presently occurring, where almost 40% of the families in Cornwall and area are on some form of social assistance. Almost 25% of the households have been told that the hydro would be cut off unless they paid the hydro bill—almost 25%. If that's not alarming, I don't know what is.

If bringing one of the new crown corporations to Cornwall will help, so be it, but again, it's Band-Aid. Every little bit counts; it will help. I compliment my colleague for bringing this private member's motion to the Legislature.

Mr Paul Johnson: It's with pleasure that I speak to this resolution today. I've got to say that on the surface, I don't support it, and I want to tell you why I don't support it. That's because if every member of this Legislature was to stand and introduce a resolution during private members' business supporting something in their particular region or constituency, then indeed we would have great difficulty, because I think to have a particular resolution supporting any indication of our own support for our own constituency would mean that all the other members wouldn't support it.

Being a member from eastern Ontario, I want to say that yes, indeed, eastern Ontario has been hit hard during this very difficult economic time and during this recession, but I don't know that it's been hit considerably harder than any other part of the province, quite frankly. Indeed, I'd like to ask the member for Cornwall if he talked to his colleague from Quinte, because I know that Trenton has been devastated by the closures of many manufacturing plants, and certainly that too is in eastern Ontario. Maybe the member for Quinte would like to stand up and introduce a resolution that would bring some kind of government jobs and government

buildings to his constituency.

Indeed, I want to say that in my own riding of Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings, I think it would be great if we could have a government building located there and ministry employees and government employees working there, because indeed in my constituency of Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings I too have felt the effects, and so have my constituents, of this very difficult recession that we have to deal with and contend with at this time.

I just want to bring some information to the members of the Legislature today with regard to just what has been done in eastern Ontario. I know that the member for Cornwall mentioned that not a lot was done with regard to the cross-border shopping issue, and I want to say that just under 50% of all the dollars spent by this government in eastern Ontario were exactly spent in Cornwall to help with the cross-border shopping issue. I want to say too that the cross-border shopping isn't just unique to Cornwall; it's unique to other parts of the province and indeed it's unique to Kingston. I guess it's not unique at all then in that respect. I guess it's more commonplace where we have border communities.

Indeed my colleague the additional parliamentary assistant to the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Norm Jamison, has been to eastern Ontario on many occasions, and he's well aware of the very difficult times that eastern Ontario has had to deal with. I believe he's been to Cornwall; I'm sure he'll correct me if I'm wrong. Indeed, he's telling me right now that he's met with the mayor and he's met with the people at Domtar, both union and management, and they're trying to resolve some of these very difficult problems that they're facing right at this time.

I have some other statistics here from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade that suggest that eastern Ontario has received, in my opinion, substantial funding, maybe not enough, but you have to look at the few dollars that we have to appropriate around the province. I guess we could always, in the interests of our own particular constituency, argue we could use a little more, and I suspect that's what the member for Cornwall is doing.

1030

However, with the very limited funds that we have, I think we have to make it clear that eastern Ontario has received some substantial funding. The eastern Ontario community economic development program has funded eastern Ontario to the tune of \$7,630,661, of which Cornwall received \$591,197. Now, proportionally, I guess you could say that's a little less than 10%, but eastern Ontario's a very big place and we have to make sure that when we allocate these funds, they are shared equitably throughout the province, and indeed, when they're allocated in eastern Ontario, that they're shared equitably throughout eastern Ontario.

For the member to stand up and ask, through a resolution, that the government locate a ministry and a ministry building and create employment through that opportunity—I want to say that's good and well, except that I'd like to have it happen in my riding and many members of this Legislature would like to have that happen in their riding. Indeed, the member for Chatham-Kent had great expectations of the government locating in his constituency and he knows now that's not going to happen. He's not happy with that, but he recognizes that he has to live with the very difficult circumstances we're dealing with at this time; indeed, he's come to accept it. He's not happy, but he's come to accept that, and we have to deal with these things.

I could go on at length about all the reasons why I think there's certainly merit in the member for Cornwall's resolution. However, there are also a lot of reasons why I can't support it. There are other members on the government side who would like to speak to this resolution, and I want to allow them that opportunity.

Mr Cleary: I made this motion not only as a clear and a necessary path to address the exceptionally damaging effect that the recession has had on eastern Ontario, but I also did it because of integrity and keeping promises.

Indeed, Cornwall shares sentiments across Ontario that the 1990 politics of change really translate into politics of disappointment and devastation. Since the NDP government assumed power, it has repeatedly pulled out of confirmed commitments, leaving area residents high and dry, time and time again. For example, the NDP failed to honour a 1990 commitment to relocate a government agency branch or ministry to the Cornwall area. There was also a commitment from the previous government to establish a substance abuse treatment centre in the Cornwall area.

The government members should be reminded of what a commitment is: a guarantee, a pledge, an obligation and a responsibility to fulfil for the people of the Cornwall area. For whatever ill-governing reasons, however, the NDP has not fulfilled these promises.

Even right now, as I speak, uncertainty continues over the construction plans for a new Ontario government building in Cornwall. From 1987 to 1990, there were numerous meetings here between former municipal representatives and ministers, and they had decided at that time that Cornwall would have provincial government identity, which it doesn't have at the present time.

When the announcement was made in the winter of 1990, it was noted that the sod-turning would take place in 1992, with occupancy in 1994. However, due to the NDP lagging, construction has not yet started, yet we've had all kinds of parliamentary assistants and ministers in the Cornwall area trying to tell the municipal people that everything is on schedule.

The city council, the municipality of Cornwall, was advised to purchase the land and has put out over \$1 million of taxpayers' money to clear the title on that property, and now they're sitting with the bill. And all we get from this government is just deadlines.

Mr Norm Jamison (Norfolk): That is wrong.

Mr Cleary: That is not wrong. The deadline has gone by again as of April 30.

Mr Jamison: That's wrong.

Mr Cleary: The member says it's wrong, but I've been just as close to that project as any of them, and I'm not wrong. The fact is that the NDP members have confirmed in the local press that construction will start this year; they should be more careful when they go to the press. Yet the province continues to put the city off. The last deadline the province gave the city was, as I said, April 30, 1993. However, unless they intend some short or miraculous construction process, the NDP have made this commitment almost impossible.

Premier Bob Rae has told me that the province is looking at ways to assist the process of economic renewal in Cornwall. Former Government Services minister Fred Wilson told me that creating stable employment in Cornwall is a priority for everyone concerned. The Economic Development and Trade minister told me that the staff has been working to support local Cornwall initiatives. I have even heard that the minister of municipal affairs intends to compensate the city for lost revenue due to lost assessment.

The time of empty promises and talk is over. Clearly it's time for the government to live up to its words and finally respond to the needs. The government building must start soon. When the building is completed, we'll have the potential to accommodate a government ministry, as has been promised. Obviously, then the building will likewise be able to meet the requirements for a crown corporation.

I would like to talk about the Domtar situation. My colleague the member for S-D-G & East Grenville spoke about that. Again, the Domtar mill faces some serious long-term plans. It has the support of the community and the three union organizations at the plant, and at least the government of Ontario could have the courtesy to meet with the Domtar people whom I have requested to meet with them.

Mr Jamison: We met with them two weeks ago, right there in Cornwall.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Cleary: As to the information the member from across is yelling over and back, I talked with the Domtar people and they have different opinions.

Anyway, this is something that's going to be very difficult for the Domtar mill to meet. I just had a call

last Friday in my constituency office, and they want to make long-term plans. As the member for S-D-G & East Grenville has said, it's going to be very difficult, and I think everyone's got to understand each other. I know that Domtar in Cornwall is not alone in this, but it has to be dealt with.

The other thing I would like to mention too about economic development in eastern Ontario is trying to develop an ethanol industry: Things seem to be moving along on that project and that should be one of the bright spots.

I want to talk about the St Lawrence Parks Commission. I guess anyone in eastern Ontario has had discussions with St Lawrence Parks Commission employees, some of whom have been laid off. I understand there are some job vacancies there. I would hope, as all members of this House should, that these people who were laid off should have the opportunity to be trained on these jobs.

1040

Getting back to the cross-border shopping, the member across the way mentioned about the money that had gone, that most of it had gone to Cornwall. Well, if he reads the newspapers, Cornwall is the area that's making the headlines on cross-border shopping. No matter what station you turn on in this province, there are always people getting caught who seem to smuggle at the Cornwall crossing. Maybe that's the reason they should have got the money.

The other thing I would have to say here is that the first allotment of money didn't come from this government; it was started by a previous government.

I know that everyone needs taxes at budget time, but I hope this government, when it's setting its budget, would surely look at not taxing cigarettes and gasoline more, because that will make the situation much, much worse. As I said earlier, our local businesses are having a terrible time to survive right now. They're not happy campers.

Again, it was mentioned about all the job losses in the area, and many of those will never come back. We have a few good companies left and we want to keep them.

I would like to get back to this \$100-million special economic development fund. The facts that we have presented here today are true, the unemployment is true, and we feel that part of that money should go to eastern Ontario. When I talk about eastern Ontario, I don't mean right in Cornwall itself. I was a municipal councillor for many years before I came here and I sat with a lot of my colleagues' constituents in S-D-G, and I know there are parts of that area that are devastated too, especially the eastern parts. I would like to support them, and anything going anywhere would assist everyone in eastern Ontario a lot.

Getting back to the interest-free loans that used to be available under former governments, that was a little bit of a competitive edge that we had over industries that had in their minds to locate probably in the United States. Right now, they come into all of our offices, they discuss their problems. They ask us, "What does the province have to offer?" We don't have much. Then they tell me what they can be offered in northern New York state. I'm sorry to say that we lose some of them to New York state. I think that's something we've got to take into consideration. I'm not in favour of gifts, but I am in favour of interest-free loans. Sometimes it's just enough to make a company make a decision, to help it with its interest for a few years.

I would like to mention there that I regret what happened to our Simmons mattress company, which was a good employer and paid good wages in our area. It's unfortunate that we have lost them back to Quebec.

The other thing I would like to mention here, that I'm sure affects us all a lot in many of our ridings, is that Ontario's construction workers, I feel, should have the same benefits the Quebec construction workers enjoy when they come to Ontario. I know we have lots of Quebec workers. Many of them are tradesmen working in our area right now on construction jobs. I have no difficulty with that as long as our own workers have those same opportunities working in another province. I think that's something that should get the attention of the government right now.

The other very serious situation—and we have hundreds, maybe thousands of them—is that our youth are coming out of university and out of high school and there doesn't seem to be much of a future this summer for them. Tomorrow I'm opening a youth employment centre and I know the staff there are working very hard to try to make sure that the youth have jobs this summer, but it's very difficult.

Another thing I mentioned yesterday in a private member's statement is that we talk about Jobs Ontario and all the opportunities there are under Jobs Ontario. We have a centennial arena that the Ministry of Labour is closing due to structural problems. It was put here by the St Lawrence Seaway. Now it's almost going to be condemned. Unless the ministry comes through with Jobs Ontario or money under Tourism, as of September that arena will be closed. I think that's something this government should look very carefully at under its Jobs Ontario program.

Mr Jamison: Once again, I rise to inform the House, as the rhetoric continues from the other side about inaction and not paying any attention to Cornwall, that I made a trip on April 30 to Cornwall to meet with the mayor, to meet with Domtar and to meet with the various stakeholders in the community to talk about the types of projects, the types of concerns Cornwall has. We haven't heard anything about the city itself and the

initiatives it's taken on its own accord, and it is of course looking in some cases for federal help and in other cases for provincial help in furthering these projects and initiatives.

I commend the mayor of Cornwall and I commend the councillors, because when I arrived on the scene there was none of this rhetoric that's going on here in the House. I was told very clearly: "We want to work with you. We have no particular axe to grind. There are projects out there that we would like your various ministries to understand and to consider in the face of the difficult times Cornwall is going through"—and I might add, difficult times that it's going through because it's a midsize manufacturing community and because a number of companies have relocated for factors that we've gone over here in this House time and time again. We hear a little about that from the Conservative member who gets up and expounds the rhetoric.

We talked about the waterfront development project, a long-range program. As I said, I met the mayor and the development people and we're working to see which steps will trigger the following steps, because that's a long-range project and will simply enhance Cornwall as a community. The need for infrastructure is there, and we have consistently been in support of that type of infrastructure-building.

When community economic development is talked about, Cornwall may well fit well into that situation. We talked down there about the St Lawrence environmental institute and how this, in conjunction with the city and the University of Ottawa and the various levels of government, could be a very positive situation to study the ecosystem in the St Lawrence and how that would add, again, to the community itself.

1050

We talk about the land acquisition proposed for the Cornwall courthouse and I apprised the Attorney General on my return about the importance of that issue. The statement that was made down there was, "We're hopeful we can have a shovel in the ground some time this year," because there are issues where, whether you're government or not, you have to pass the hurdles.

I apprised the Attorney General personally of that situation, and I'd like to remind you that it was only a few days ago that I was there. Again, I was treated much better there than I am here, I can tell you that. Just last Friday, a delegation from Cornwall came from Cornwall and visited me at 5 o'clock in the afternoon and went away saying, "You know, we really do now get the sense that we're being heard."

The Premier, this Friday, will be in Hawkesbury and will be meeting with various delegations there, I can tell you that, and that's something the local mayor and council think is a very positive step and feel very good about. I can tell you that this issue, the courthouse

issue, the land acquisition issue, is of great importance to the community of Cornwall, and we recognize that.

The province, as I say, has to get over hurdles, just as any government has to, to acquire, to build and so on. Apparently, both former premiers, Frank Miller and David Peterson, visited Cornwall with no resultant economic benefit to the city whatsoever. So here we have again in this House the line of rhetoric coming from the other side, and it's horrendous as far as I'm concerned. Treasury Board approval of the land acquisition would be, in my opinion, a major win for the community, and we're working to see if that can be achieved in the most efficient, fastest manner possible.

I can tell you that when we talk about the issues that affect Cornwall—and they do affect Cornwall. They affect Cornwall very significantly, and we have taken measures, taken steps, to assess what role we can play there.

In normal terms, without a resolution in the House, the proactivity has been ongoing. I have been there and met with delegations from Cornwall twice in the last week and a half. The rhetoric that comes from this House, from the other side, on this resolution is mind-boggling.

With that, I just thought that the facts might be well put on the record here, and I'll sit in my place at this point.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I'm pleased, since I'm from eastern Ontario and have intense interest in it, to say a few words about it. I also, with my colleagues, am concerned about the negativism that has arisen here. I would like to think that what we're doing here is trying to look at areas, remembering that we are part of a province and that all areas are suffering and that it's what we do together that counts.

I wanted to say too that it goes beyond geography; I have a personal connection. One of my early vivid memories was travelling with my uncle, Ken Rothwell in a milk wagon drawn by a horse. He was working for River Mead Dairy at the time. My aunt tells me there were a couple of other dairies there, Eastside and West Front. All three of them have disappeared.

My uncle went to work then for Entwistle Lumber for a couple years, and finally on to Dominion Tape. Certainly, Dominion Tape has changed. So in his own working lifetime, he went through a lot of change, and I think that's what we're looking at now. We have to recognize that there's change and that we've got to meet it.

One of the ways we're meeting it is through the Royal Commission on Learning, and I'm pleased to see that Manisha Bharti from Cornwall is one of the commissioners, a student commissioner, which I think shows our confidence in the future by naming a student—and a student from Cornwall. I'm proud to say

that somebody from eastern Ontario is taking this role that will help the province come up with the kind of education we need.

Again I say, let's emphasize the positive. My colleague Mr Jamison mentioned community economic development. Let's see what we can do together, not only in Cornwall, not only in eastern Ontario, but across the province.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): In the very brief moment that I have left, I'd like to speak to this as well. There's no question that delivering on anti-recession jobs to communities that have been devastated by the recession is a good and positive thing, and I think every member of this Legislature would agree that's a good thing. But I have to tell you, in my own community of Downsview, there are a number of jobs that are being planned to be moved out—it was announced by the Liberal government in the last election—and some of those jobs are going.

Do I like that? My community of Downsview has been devastated by the recession. The majority of people work in construction, and we all know what's happened in the construction industry, in the construction sector. Have I fought that move? Absolutely. I think that in my own community it's a devastating thing; there's no question about it. Will I accept the move when it happens? Of course I'll accept the move when it happens. Will I continue to fight that move? Absolutely, Mr Speaker. To do anything less would be a disservice to the community and to the kind of people I represent.

You can't correct 40 years of Conservative inequities, five years of Liberal aggrandizements, in just one term of office, but we're going to govern for all the people of Ontario. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Cornwall, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr Cleary: I'm awful sorry that the parliamentary assistant has left, because he talks about newspaper clippings here, about all the good things. There is a picture of the mayor of Cornwall here. "And it ended in silence. Not even a whisper has been heard from," Premier Bob Rae's staff, "Martelle admitted." Martelle said he hasn't heard anything. He will again contact Rae's staff. This is after the parliamentary assistant's visit to Cornwall. No NDP money but lots of promises.

Then another headline in the paper, "Visit No Coup; Parliamentary Assistant One Step Above Backbencher." So that's the kind of press we've been getting.

To get back to it, the city of Cornwall has taken initiatives and we are working on the environmental institute. I was involved in that project since day one, the first meeting, and we have our meetings. We've had meetings up here with this government, looking for some type of assistance.

One other thing I should say is that there hasn't been anything flowed through from the province of Ontario, but I do have to say that the federal government, at our last meeting last Friday, announced that it was getting involved in the project.

Mr Paul Johnson: It's election time.

Mr Cleary: Maybe so. Anyway, there are a few things I would hope would attract attention: the St Lawrence Parks Commission. I would hope they would work with the municipality to get St Lawrence Parks open.

For the residents of eastern Ontario, I look forward to each of you backing this sorely-needed new and permanent employment opportunity, along with the economic spinoff that will result, for the establishment of a crown corporation.

The Deputy Speaker: The time for the first ballot item has expired.

1100

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE COMMERCE INTERPROVINCIAL

Mr Sterling moved resolution number 7:

That in the opinion of this House, since all interprovincial trade barriers should be removed as soon as possible; and

Since the province of Ontario has been negotiating with the province of Quebec for over 15 years to allow equal access to construction jobs and construction contracts in both provinces; and

Since Quebec workers and Quebec contractors have free access to the Ontario construction market; and

Since Ontario workers and Ontario contractors are not allowed free access to the Quebec construction market; and

Since negotiation has proved fruitless and the patience of the people of eastern Ontario is exhausted;

Therefore, Ontario should declare a Quebec-Ontario construction employment equity policy which would include the following statement as a condition of tendering for Quebec bidders:

That until the preferential restrictions in Quebec currently applying to non-Quebec businesses and labour are repealed, only those having their principal place of business in Ontario be allowed to bid unless specifically invited.

That the term "principal place of business" will be interpreted to mean the principal establishment from which the business of a firm, as it relates to the tender, is directed and where the supervisory staff and equipment are ordinarily located.

That the coverage of the policy will include for construction prime contracts, subcontracts, goods supplied and installed, services within these contracts.

That there be a term inserted in all construction contracts that a construction contractor or subcontractor must give hiring preference to an Ontario resident over

a Quebec resident.

That the Ontario government insist these conditions be included in any construction contract for which it is providing partial or full funding.

That this policy be immediately terminated when Ontario construction workers and contractors have equal access to the province of Quebec.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Mr Sterling moves private member's resolution number 7. Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I want to emphasize the first and the last statement in the resolution, and that is that we in this House in all political parties have professed in the past that all interprovincial trade barriers should be removed in Canada, and the last line of this particular resolution says it should be terminated as soon as we in Ontario, our construction workers, our construction contractors, have equal access to the Quebec provincial market.

It pains me in some ways to bring this resolution to this House, because I don't believe in interprovincial trade barriers. I want to also indicate that every contractor who has talked to me, every construction worker who has talked to me, has said: "We don't want preferential treatment over Quebec workers, Quebec contractors. All we want is equal access to their market, as they have to ours."

Mr Speaker, the question may be asked by those who do not live in eastern Ontario and who are not touched by this problem as deeply as we are, "What are the barriers in each province, the barriers in Quebec and in Ontario?" I want to read to you, sir, from a federal government document on preferential policies.

It outlines for the province of Quebec: "Provincial construction contracts will be awarded only to those contractors having their principal place of business in the province," and "Bidders must engage subcontractors who have permanent establishments in Quebec." For contracts exceeding \$10,000, a preference of up to 10% is applied to the correct content of the bids. Then it goes down to Ontario. This is a federal document. "Ontario does not appear to have any preferential buying policies in respect of construction services specifically."

I also want to read from a document which I received from the Ottawa Construction Association, which is very much touched by this problem:

"Employees wishing to work in Quebec are required to have a competency card and pass a mandatory safety course. The competency card is a prime source of distress and is somewhat a misnomer, because in a slow economic period they don't give any of these cards out."

In other words, it has nothing to do with the ability of a worker to pass a test as to his knowledge about safety matters; it has to do with allowing a worker to even apply for work in the province of Quebec.

The worst result of this requirement is permanent job loss for Ontarians. For example, a contractor who has obtained permission to bid on contracts in Quebec in the eastern Ontario area on the first Quebec project he successfully tendered attempted to get competency cards for his employees to no avail. He eventually laid off some of his regular employees and hired a number of Quebec employees with cards.

He has just advised me that he will be going through a regular layoff because of a lack of work in the next week or so. His only logical business choice is to lay off his regular, long-term employees from Ontario, who have been with him for up to 10 years, and keep the Quebec employees because they have cards and can work on both sides of the Ottawa River.

Ontario has no such restriction on employees. Some trades require licensing and apprenticeships; however, there are no restrictions on the numbers at any time. For employers to compete in Quebec, they must be licensed, belong to an employer's association, have office space in the province of Quebec and have a Quebec telephone number. A contractor's ability to obtain a licence varies. There have been reports of harassment and the inability to obtain that licence. To work in Ontario as a contractor, a Quebec person coming this way, regardless of origin, must simply register with the WCB if he has employees.

That is the sum total of the problem that we have here. I am running short of time, but I want to tell you of a number of individual cases where there have been restrictions on Ontario contractors. I refer to the James Bay project where, as anybody who wanted to bid on a James Bay project, the contractor or subcontractor, had to have been doing business in the province of Quebec for a period of 10 years and had to have offices in the province of Quebec in order to bid on that huge hydro-electric project.

This week, in the Commercial News I read about a very small project in the city of Hull to do some landscaping at the Hull tourist train station. It reads, "Tenderers having their main place of business in the province of Quebec are invited to submit a tender." In other words, all of those landscapers, those people involved in the paving industry in the province of Ontario, do not even have the opportunity to bid on this particular contract.

On the other hand, I have a letter from Gaston Lavoie, who owns a cabinet shop in your riding, Mr Speaker, and he writes to me that just recently he has lost a \$200,000 job to a millwork shop in Gatineau. He does not complain that they came in and competed with him; he only complains that he cannot go back across

into the province of Quebec and bid on construction jobs in that province. He estimates that he has lost \$300,000 worth of work over the last few years in terms of being able to do business there.

Mr Speaker, I want you also to know, and other members should know, that this just doesn't affect eastern Ontario. I received a letter from Ken Lilley, president of Modern Railings and Metalcraft, who has been attempting to supply jobs to many of his long-term and loyal employees here in the province of Ontario.

He informs me that subcontracts on the Princess Margaret Hospital, not 1,000 feet from this building, the Solicitor General's building in Ottawa, Queen's University in Kingston, the Attorney General's building in Ottawa, the Kitchener city hall in Kitchener, of course, and the Sick Children's Hospital, again just down the street, all have significant amounts of Quebec workers working on those buildings, Quebec subcontractors who are allowed to come in and bid competitively on those buildings. Mr Lilley doesn't complain about the fact that he has to bid against these people, but he would like the opportunity to go to Montreal and Quebec City and bid on contracts in those areas.

We're not talking about closing borders because we want to exclude competition. We're talking about opening another border to allow our people to have equal access to another market. This started back in 1977. It's been going on for some 15 years. Various governments, including the government of which I was a part, mouthed that they wanted to do away with interprovincial trade barriers. They have tried to negotiate with the province of Quebec to drop these trade barriers and give equal access to the market.

1110

Three things recently have sharpened the focus on this debate. Number one, we have a recession. Number two, the ministers of the various provincial governments and the federal government have decided to meet this summer to try to start to discuss how they're going to get rid of these interprovincial barriers. But thirdly, and more important, a sharp focus was given to this debate, and I must quite frankly admit that a lot of this resolution is copied from the same policy proposal put forward by the Premier of New Brunswick.

Frank McKenna has shown a great deal of leadership in this matter. He has decided to take the bull by the horns. I think it is only fair that construction workers, construction contractors, in the province of Ontario receive the same kind of support as Frank McKenna has given to the contractors and contracting workers in his province.

We live in a federation; we must live with each other. We have shown respect for Quebec contracting workers and Quebec contractors. In my view, Quebec has not shown the same mutual respect. It is unfortunate the way we have to take this step, but we must get them to

the bargaining table. We must get to them the message that we mean business.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): The proposed resolution would permit only those tenders having their principal place of business in Ontario to bid on contracts unless specifically invited. As well, it recommends that construction contractors or subcontractors give hiring preference to Ontario residents over Quebec residents.

Mr Sterling: That's not right. Read it again.

Mr Marchese: Clearly, Mr Sterling's motion is in response to current restrictions in Quebec which inhibit access to the Quebec market by the province's construction workers and firms bidding on government business. In contradistinction our government, the Ontario public sector market, is open to other provinces' businesses and workers and, in addition, Ontario's purchasing policies include a buy-Canadian pricing preference and not a provincial preference. That, obviously, is a better way to go.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Your own city isn't even open. They exclude other municipalities, for heaven's sake.

Mr Marchese: Ontario businesses and workers in the construction sector, particularly in the Ottawa-Hull area, have consistently raised the issue of lack of access to the Quebec market. I understand that.

Mr Stockwell: Workers in your own city.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West, the member for Fort York has the floor.

Mr Marchese: I think all members on all sides understand that. There is no question that the inability of Ontario construction workers to work on projects in Quebec is a serious problem that needs to be dealt with.

Mr Sterling says, however, as a strategic move: "Let's deal with that. Let's do what New Brunswick has done." And what has New Brunswick done? It says they will ban Quebec contractors, workers and manufacturers from doing business in their province.

So Mr Sterling says: "Let's take leadership again. Let's do what New Brunswick has done. Do similarly." What does that do? It has done two things, in my view. It has done, first of all—

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): It gets their attention.

Mr Marchese: Yes, it has attracted our attention, but first of all it has violated the moratorium that was agreed to by all of the provinces to bring down, not to raise new barriers, so that is a problem, and in doing so has breached an agreement that has been agreed to by the ministers on intergovernmental trade affairs. In my view, that's a problem.

Mr Sterling is proposing that Ontario take leadership and violate that agreement as well, in effect breaching

the agreement and raising more trade barriers. Is that the answer? Clearly, from Mr Sterling, that is the strategic way to go.

I say that is not the way to go. As you meet with ministers and as premiers meet from all over Canada to talk about how to deal with this issue as a way of getting rid of intergovernmental trade barriers, that we not erect the same barriers to deal with the issue, that, in my view, is contradictory.

Mr Sterling says, "I want to eliminate intergovernmental blocks to trade," and at the same time he proposes to erect more trade barriers as a solution to the other. I think it contradicts his position and his leader's position that we eliminate intergovernmental trade barriers, and I propose several things: that we allow the committee of ministers on internal trade to continue to work on this and not to continue to breach the agreements that they have already reached, upon which progress has been made, and allow for the kind of cooperative, consultative discussions we've been having. Otherwise, what that motion would do, if it's supported by this government, by all three sides, is make it more difficult for the different governments to get rid of intergovernmental trade barriers.

I think it's important to look at the different strategies that are needed to reach a consensus as opposed to the protectionist approach that is proposed that will lead to further divisions and further attacks from one province to the other.

I hope that Mr Sterling will reconsider his motion, allow the negotiations to continue, let us see what is proposed, let us see what they do, and after they've done that then we can come back to this issue and discuss that again.

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): I was glad to hear the member for Carleton say that he was actually pained to introduce this legislation and having to speak to this legislation because, without question, this is a very difficult and unpleasant undertaking for us to seemingly try to advocate trade barriers. I certainly agree with the member for Carleton, and the members opposite as well, that the last thing we really want to do is have more internal barriers in this country. We want to bring them down. I think we're all agreed on this one.

However, I'm also pained because, frankly, I have a bit of a partisan suspicion on this particular motion. It just so happens that a member of my own party, the member for Ottawa East, has a resolution which addresses the same issue on the order paper to be discussed next week. I must say, I was wondering whether an attempt was being made here to upstage the member for Ottawa East with a resolution which I think is going to produce some results. This particular motion that we have before us, I think, is getting us and getting the member for Carleton some press attention, and perhaps that's what he was after, but I think the motion

that we're going to debate next week has a chance to move this whole dossier forward.

I must support the member for Carleton, however, when he says that this issue is a major irritant in our area. Being from Nepean, which is just next to the member's riding, I have had numerous calls and letters over the years on this particular issue. Frankly, I have taken, again, action on these questions, and I generally like to work with the ministry and with the individuals concerned to see whether something can be done rather than go out into the public and raise some ruckus, as it were.

I wrote, in fact, just at the beginning of this year—and I've done that before—on January 13 to the acting regional director of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology in Ottawa asking what they were doing. I said, and I'm quoting here from my letter: "Every so often I receive calls from irate constituents who complain about discriminatory hiring practices in the province of Quebec. What is your experience?"

Frankly, I got a letter back from the official that I considered rather wishy-washy, I must say. I thought the answer that I did receive was not satisfactory, so I went a step higher.

1120

I then wrote—and all of this was, in fact, long before the member for Carleton put forward his motion—to the Honourable Frances Lankin, who's now in charge of this issue, the new Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and here's what I said to the minister on March 26 in my letter—I haven't received an answer yet, which is now almost two months ago. I don't want to be too critical of that because the minister when she was the Minister of Health had been pretty good in answering her letters and I do expect to get a response from her pretty soon. Anyway, here's what I said:

"You probably know, Minister, that the difference in rules for Quebec and Ontario workers to find employment in their neighbouring province has been a major irritant for many years, especially in this area. From the enclosed Citizen article, it appears that New Brunswick has recently taken steps which many people here in Nepean would like to see taken by their own province. May I ask whether your ministry has analysed the New Brunswick initiative and whether similar actions are being considered by the Ontario government?"

I go on a little bit and I say, "I look forward with interest to your response." As I say, I have not received a response yet from the minister and I am very, very keen to hear what she has to say in response to my letter.

I should say that while I really agree with the member for Carleton that this is a major issue in our area, it is an issue that perhaps has more to do with symbolism than with the actual reality. As the member said, it's

been almost 15 years that there have been restrictions—"restrictions" is really the wrong word, but there has been labour legislation in the province of Quebec since 1977 that really makes it very difficult for Ontario workers to work in the province of Quebec.

Now, over these almost 15 years, frankly, I don't think that either the Ottawa-Carleton economy or the Ontario economy generally has significantly suffered from this particular labour legislation in Quebec. In fact, I think during the boom years we were glad that we had Quebec workers who were able to do the construction jobs that were available in our province. Now, of course, with the recession the situation is different.

I should say also that when we're talking about discriminatory practices, it isn't really on behalf of the province of Quebec a discriminatory practice towards Ontario workers; it's also discriminatory, if you want to use that term, towards the workers in Quebec, because what the labour legislation there does is it allocates a certain number of jobs to certain regions of the province of Quebec. Frankly, it was an attempt by the unions under the PQ government to protect their jobs. So even if you're a Quebecker and you want to work in a certain area of the province, if you don't have that little card, you can't work. There have been, in fact, numerous articles in the press in Ottawa-Carleton describing the dissatisfaction of Quebecers themselves with this particular legislation.

So it isn't a rule that is specifically set up to discriminate, as it were, against Ontario workers. It is, however, a symbolic irritant, much like the sign language legislation, which, as we all know, has had a very major impact on English-French relations in Quebec and the rest of Canada and relations in this province. So, really, I think this is a matter that needs addressing, and that's why I think what the member is trying to do is put forward renewed urgency in sending a message to the minister to please pay some attention to this, that this is a very important issue.

J'aimerais aussi m'adresser à ces personnes qui parlent français, ou même peut-être s'il y a des personnes de la province de Québec qui nous suivent maintenant, et indiquer que cette question des restrictions des travailleurs dans la province de Québec est pour nous, les Ontariens et les Ontariennes, une question qui est très, très importante et qui nous fait problème.

Alors, croyez-vous que ce n'est pas un geste anti-Québec ou anti-francophone, mais nous, nous regardons ça comme une question de justice, de «fairness», comme on dit en anglais. Nous aimerions vraiment qu'on s'assoie ensemble pour régler ces problèmes et pour éliminer toutes les barrières pour le commerce dans notre beau pays du Canada.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I am pleased to share in this debate for a few moments and to get some thoughts on the record about the absolute disgrace of

the interprovincial trade barriers, what it means to consumers in this country, and the job-killing aspect of the interprovincial trade barriers.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association gives us an estimate that's actually a little lower, I think, than the Consumers' Association of Canada. It says that the interprovincial trade barriers cost Canadians \$6.5 billion a year. The average family of four spends \$1,000 more a year because of the interprovincial trade barriers. Those are after-tax dollars, which you know are pretty scarce around this province these days. We cannot allow this travesty to continue.

Not only is it unfair for consumers all across Canada, but the second reason we can't allow it to continue is that our manufacturers cannot compete. We put these barriers up so they have to have a plant in Quebec to sell in Quebec and a plant in Ontario to sell in Ontario. They cannot compete, so the foreign competition, those companies outside Canada, are killing us; they're stealing our jobs. You know what? It's their right to do so, because for them it's not stealing; it's competing.

So we have to look inward. We have to look at ourselves. We're depriving ourselves of these jobs. We're taking jobs away from Canadians. This inward-looking, "Oh, let's hang on; you know, we need this plant in North Bay," which is in my riding, and "We must buy everything from them." Quebec says, "Oh, that's fine, we'll buy everything from our plant." Manitoba says, "That's fine, we'll buy everything from our plant." We've got three inefficient plants, none of them can compete, all three shut down and we lose jobs. We cost consumers, a family of four over \$1,000 a year, and we're losing jobs.

For the last 13 years just about, when I was first elected and came here, 12 years I guess, into the 13th year, I have raised the issue, particularly for those of us close to the Quebec border, because our little businesses in North Bay all the way up to Timmins, anywhere where you're within 40 miles of the Ottawa River, which is all of northeastern Ontario, all Highway 11, all the way down to Ottawa, our little businesses get hammered, and they can't compete, and we lose jobs in Ontario because Quebec has interprovincial trade barriers that say you can't go over there and build homes, you can't fix roofs, you can't pave, you can't work in Quebec.

Ontario has said to Quebec companies, "Oh, but you can come over here and do it and work in Ontario." So our little companies get hammered. The Quebec companies, the small ones particularly, get the efficiencies of operation of being able to serve two markets, Quebec and Ontario, and our companies don't, and we lose jobs.

The answer I got from Progressive Conservative premiers, from Progressive Conservative ministers of Intergovernmental Affairs, from Liberal premiers, from Liberal ministers of Intergovernmental Affairs and now

from NDP premiers was: "Oh, you've got to be nice to Quebec. We all agree with you, Mike. We want to eliminate these interprovincial trade barriers, but you've got to do it in the right way. You've got to be nice to Quebec. You can't have equal rules here. That won't work. You know, we've got these constitutional discussions coming up." Okay.

This is what always happened. Now, finally, we've got a premier in this country with the courage to come up and say enough is enough, because New Brunswick was getting hammered. New Brunswick was getting hammered too, losing jobs, unfair trade practices, unfair interprovincial trade barriers in Quebec. So there's only one way to bring them to the table, and that's to say, "If we can't do business in Quebec, you can't do business in Ontario." That is how you're going to solve it. The only way Quebec is going to come to the table, the only way they're going to come to the table—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Nipissing has the floor.

Mr Harris: It is a war right now; it is a war we're losing. Ontarians are losing jobs. The closer you are to the Quebec border, the more your children are going hungry because you're losing jobs unfairly. We want no trade barriers, and there's only one way to get that, because for 13 years Quebec has not budged one iota; not one iota.

1130

I tell you this: Premier Davis's approach was wrong, Premier Peterson's approach was wrong, Premier Rae's approach is wrong. It's not being solved. They said, "We've got constitutional discussion." I said, "Fine, let's make sure that interprovincial trade barriers are on the table, for Ontario's sake, in the constitutional discussions." Peterson said, "No; more important issues here." Rae said, "No; more important issues here." Nobody spoke for Ontario at any of these discussions, and we're losing jobs.

Now Quebec is interested in talking to New Brunswick, because Frank McKenna said, "Same rules." I hear NDP members now crying and screaming, the same ones who cry and scream when American companies say, "We want fair rules," the same ones who cry and scream when we say, "As Canadians, we want fair trading rules with the United States, with other countries." But you're prepared to sit here, criticize me and allow Ontarians to lose their jobs because we can't get a level playing field with the other provinces.

I'm supporting this resolution. I think it's a chance for us to send a strong message. As none of our premiers, Progressive Conservative, Liberal or NDP, has had the guts or courage to stand up and fight for Ontario workers, it's a chance for us members to come together to send a message to this leadership at the top,

these élites that think they can go off to all these discussions and say, "Oh, we'll be nice to you." Meanwhile, we're losing jobs and consumers pay \$1,000 a year more for a family of four.

We can stop it. We can start this process happening by unanimously supporting the resolution put forward by the member for Carleton to say, "Let's have a level playing field today as a means to eliminate completely all of the interprovincial trade barriers." This motion says tit for tat: Every time Quebec says, "We'll drop this one," we'll drop that, and we will get down. But for 13 years I've been here and I've seen what's happened: Not one speck of progress while we lose jobs, while consumers pay more money.

These newly elected NDP members, who have the experience in governing that has led their party to 8% in the polls, think they have better ideas. I ask you to think about this in a non-partisan way, as we are to do here in private members' bills. I ask you to really think about whether we can't come together, not the élites, not the bosses, but just the members, speaking on behalf of our constituents in Ontario, on behalf of consumers, on behalf of those who are losing jobs, particularly close to the borders.

Mr Norm Jamison (Norfolk): It's a pleasure to address this issue, although I have to say that I stand here and scratch my head, because, I'll tell you, hearing that type of line from a party that externally, outside this country, expounds the virtues—and we've seen those virtues—of free trade, we have to look at a resolution coming forward here today that talks about putting trade barriers up internally here in Canada.

There have been various Conservative federal ministers who have said clearly that one of the problems is that we have to lower these trade barriers. To that effect, they've said, "We have to get in line with the free trade atmosphere." We don't agree with them about the way fairer trade was negotiated. If they took the same position on softwood lumber, steel, red meat and so on and so on, they'd certainly be proposing today that we would be putting barriers higher and higher externally.

But here we're talking about internally. Within Canada, within this great country of ours, we're talking about forming the battle lines: "Let's dig the trenches."

Meanwhile, in March 1992, first ministers directed internal trade ministers to work towards the elimination of interprovincial trade barriers by 1995. Again, I stand here and I scratch my head. Where is the third party, the Conservative Party, coming from? I don't understand how they can speak out of both sides of their mouths at the same time. But they're doing a good job of that.

The leader of the third party just indicated, "Other people say we've got to be nice to Quebec." On that issue, I just want to reinforce a thought here, one that's

been brought forward in this House many times. Quebec transfer payments from the Conservative federal government: 50%, 50 cents on every dollar in certain areas. Our share: dropping to about 30 cents, 29 cents. The leader of the third party, speaking out of both sides of his mouth at the same time, says simply, "You guys were just being too nice to Quebec."

We have made an agreement with all first ministers to work towards bringing down barriers. In this House we have a member of the Conservative Party who wants to build those barriers up. It's mind-boggling, just mind-boggling.

We talk about trade. If the members there were so proactive about fair trade, not just internally but externally, they'd be looking at the steel industry, which is in trouble, which simply, from the federal Conservatives—and Conservatives are Conservatives. Don't let anyone be fooled. They take a position on external trade and take an opposite position here internally with Canadians. I don't know how they can reconcile those points. I don't know how they can draw the conclusion that they're being consistent; they are not. They're being disruptive—I'll agree with that—but they're not being consistent, nor have they been.

Depending on the issue and the day and whatever, it seems that the third party can just sort of put its finger in the air these days and find out which way the wind's blowing and go that route. I'll tell you, what a flip-flop. They like to talk to us about flip-flops. What a flip-flop on trade. I've used the term "mind-boggling." It just makes me wonder what party put forward this resolution. I find it incredible, just incredible. Ontario is open to goods and services from anywhere in Canada and has consistently supported the creation of a fair and open trading environment in Canada. Ontario's procurement policies are designed to ensure value for money, preference for Canadian suppliers and support for such initiatives as green industry, green procurement.

When we find ourselves dealing with a resolution from the third party of this nature, a destructive resolution rather than a constructive one, I can tell you—I've said it a number of times today—we're watching the third party speak out of both sides of its mouth at the same time. Of course, they'll accuse us later on today of doing the same, but you're doing that, speaking out of both sides of your mouth.

1140

Mr Frank Miclash (Kenora): It gives me great pleasure to rise in favour of the private member's resolution as presented by Mr Sterling, the member for Carleton.

I must say that I have a similar problem in the riding of Kenora. As you know, the riding of Kenora borders the province of Manitoba. At the outset, I must make the point very clear that eventually I feel that all interprovincial trade barriers should be removed. But

more importantly—and I think some of the members have alluded to it already—the playing field must be made level. I speak of the playing field whether it be in Quebec, I speak of the playing field whether it be in Ontario or Manitoba. We have to get around to where that playing field is made level.

This is very important to us in northwestern Ontario. I hear it on a regular basis, where even though we have the interprovincial trade barriers and we know they have to be removed, we have to talk about that playing field, more importantly.

Let me give you some examples where the Ontario contractor is at a disadvantage, at a disadvantage in terms of firms, whether they're firms coming from Quebec or firms coming from Manitoba. One of the prime things the Ontario contractor faces is an extra 2% which is going into the employer health tax. Of course, we know a firm out of Manitoba can get around paying that 2%, so on major contracts that are given—these are major contracts of millions of dollars—that percentage does make a difference. When we talk about millions of dollars in terms of the payroll, again, we see a good amount where the playing field is not exactly level.

Another area in terms of my riding, again the riding closest to Manitoba, where the Manitoba contractor does have that advantage is in the provincial sales tax. Some people in the House will know that there's not a level playing field there: The Manitoba provincial sales tax is 7% and the Ontario provincial sales tax of course is 8%. It does bring forth other problems than just that 1% difference. What we find in our area is that quite often, by a common carrier, materials can be shipped from Manitoba into Ontario. It's up to the contractor or the person making the purchase to remit the provincial sales tax to Ontario, and, Mr Speaker, let me let you in on a little secret: Sometimes that is not remitted. Quite often, there is really no follow-through. To a Treasurer looking for revenue, this is a big problem in my riding, a riding so close to Manitoba. As has been said by the president of the local association of contractors—that's the Kenora association of contractors—it's only by luck that the province collects the sales tax. Quite often, we see that it is just by luck, because there is no enforcement. Again I say that this has actually made the playing field unlevel.

When we look at qualified journeymen, we know that many jobs require these qualified journeymen to come in from other provinces and, if they do come in from other provinces, to have qualifications that meet the standards here in Ontario. This is sometimes not the case when we have contractors coming over from Manitoba, firms from Manitoba: They are just not meeting those specifications.

Let me give you one example of where we've had a real tremendous problem here, this being a contractor from Manitoba and doing a job in Ontario. Problems

arose in the job. Complaints were made. The Ministry of Labour came out to inspect. Of course, they did not arrive in Kenora till eight weeks later. By then, the contractor had packed up, gone home. As I say, it was eight weeks later before they found out where Kenora was on the map.

I look at a portion of the resolution that says that there be a term inserted in all construction contracts that the construction contractor's subcontractor must give hiring preference to an Ontario resident. Throughout the area, we know who is and who isn't qualified to do these jobs; that when other contractors come into the area, we lose this, and somehow it's lost. I get back to the real, common concern we have in the riding, and that's in terms of the level playing field.

Take a look at Ontario tax dollars flowing into my riding, whether it be anti-recession funding or through Jobs Ontario; take a look at where that money goes. Quite often, Jobs Ontario in northwestern Ontario has become Jobs Manitoba, because when bidding on the contracts, our contractors just don't have the same advantage as those in Manitoba.

I brought this to the attention of the government many times in letters to the various ministers, and we always go back to, "Yes, we have to drop the barriers." But if we're going to drop barriers, we have to get back to that aspect of making sure that everything is equal for contractors from all provinces.

We take a look at the workers' compensation rates: \$3.16 per \$100 on the payroll in Manitoba compared to \$5.78 per \$100 in Ontario: a big difference and one we are faced with competing with. I think Ontario contractors are looking for the opportunity to do the jobs and I think they're ably qualified.

Just recently, on May 6, an announcement was made in my riding in terms of a contract for sections of highway close to Sioux Lookout. It was a \$2.4-million contract, and guess where that went? Of course, it ended up in the hands of a Manitoba contractor. I have the news release in front of me from the Ministry of Transportation, and nowhere in that news release does it tell us that this contract has gone to that Manitoba firm, but for many of the reasons I have reiterated, it has certainly gone to Manitoba.

In wrapping up, I must say that I want to send a clear message to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, that when she gets to that table, the table the member speaks about, later on this summer, she should go there with the idea of eliminating these trade barriers, but as well she should go with the idea that we're going to come about with areas that will ensure effective ways that our contractors will be on the same level playing field I have indicated. I hope she takes that message as well.

Mr Villeneuve: C'est avec un certain degré de peine

ce matin que je m'élève pour adresser un problème d'inégalité qui dure depuis longtemps dans la province de l'Ontario, dans la province de Québec, du côté des employés syndiqués dans les domaines tels que la construction.

Il y a déjà plusieurs années que je siège au sein d'un comité interprovincial qui essaie d'adresser, de corriger ces problèmes. Puis, je vais vous expliquer la raison pour laquelle j'appuie le projet de loi de mon collègue le député de Carleton ce matin.

There are a number of reasons. I am to a great degree somewhat unhappy about addressing this problem this morning, but it must be addressed.

I can't imagine the member for Norfolk now being in favour of protection against workers from Ontario. I'm surprised he is now coming fully on side with the Quebec unions, those that literally ran the country when the Parti québécois was in power, those that created laws similar to Bill 40, now creating a situation where 20% of journeymen, construction people, are unemployed, and that's coming to this province.

This government is willing to let the Quebec union people come into Ontario and take our jobs, yet because we're in favour of free trade and we're in favour of having Ontario people go to Quebec, they tell us we're inconsistent. I don't understand your logic and I hope someone explains that logic, because as far as I'm concerned there is no logic.

I have addressed this—and I won't read the entire letter but I'll read parts of it—to the interprovincial working group back last January:

"Journeymen workers from Quebec are fully able to participate in working within the province of Ontario. However, the reciprocal agreement is not at all the same for an Ontario journeyman labourer attempting to work in the province of Quebec."

I go on and describe problems not only with construction people, but with interprovincial marketing boards, where the poultry produced in Ontario must be processed in Quebec—a whole bunch of irritants that are there.

Worst of all, we come from the region of Cornwall, economically deprived. In construction right now, many Quebec workers are working in Ontario. I don't even know if they're working legally, but they're working in Ontario, and there is no problem.

1150

The straw that broke the camel's back: The province of Quebec last fall inaugurated a process whereby anyone who is not driving a pickup truck with a Quebec licence plate is subject to a \$750 fine if they do not have the Quebec sticker when they are caught on Quebec roads. That decided me that, look, they continue, in spite of everything we've brought forth, to irritate out-of-province people.

The prime example, a pickup truck: A constituent of mine went to the town of Valleyfield to purchase some furniture that was built and retailed in the province of Quebec. The gas police stopped him. He didn't have a sticker. "This is the only vehicle I have, and I purchased some furniture in Valleyfield. I'm taking it home." "Therefore you have a commercial vehicle. You're hauling furniture." The man was charged \$750 plus court costs for having gone to Quebec to purchase furniture that was built and retailed in Quebec. That had to be the worst of the worst. Quite obviously, the members of this government support this kind of action.

I have been trying to get legislation, or at least common sense, in place, but no, the government of Quebec saw fit to hire over 200 enforcers to nail people from Ontario. I represent people right up to the edge of the province of Quebec, and they quite often take their pickup truck and go to a ball game in Montreal, or a hockey game. I'm a Montreal Canadiens fan, and if I take my pickup and go into Quebec to go to a hockey game, I could wind up with a \$750 fine, plus costs, and the members of this government are encouraging more and more of this? This occurred last fall.

The journeymen workers on construction have been going through this. Every year in the almost 10 years that I've been elected, people come and say, "Look, when are you going to do something?" "Well, I'm on this committee. We're addressing it. We're going to fix it." Did we fix it? It's worse than ever, and because of draconian labour laws the likes of what we now have in Ontario, the Ontario workers are going to suffer the invasion of Quebec workers coming to Ontario. That is the truth. Members in the government are shaking their heads.

Now we have the enforcing of the gas sticker tax. That is adding insult to injury, and therefore I have no recourse but to fully support the member for Carleton's resolution. I want to emphasize, the very final words say, "That this policy be immediately terminated when Ontario construction workers and contractors have equal access to the province of Quebec."

We have to get their attention. They continue insulting the residents of Ontario. If we don't get their attention, we won't be able to solve it. I say to you that we have to get them to look at what our residents are subject to whenever they're dealing with Quebec. I say, amen.

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I would think there's nobody in this House who doesn't agree with this resolution brought forward, but I would like to state that right now there are negotiations that were set up by the committee of ministers on internal trade, an agreement to begin comprehensive negotiations to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers in Canada. As well, ministers confirmed a moratorium on the creation of new trade barriers.

I believe a small amendment should be made to this resolution, and it should state that if the negotiations fail, then we would follow through on this resolution, but what we should do is remain committed to the process and participate fully in negotiations to eliminate barriers and increase worker mobility.

The unemployment rate in some trades, for instance the IBEW, the electrical workers' union, is presently over 50%, and when they see tradespeople from Quebec coming in to do work for which they are denied access in Quebec, there is certainly cause for hard feeling. I know that to work in Quebec in the construction industry the regulations give priority to workers who live in the region where work is to be performed. This system appears to make it impossible for out-of-province workers to gain entry to the Quebec construction industry unless there is a labour shortage. In addition to affecting out-of-province workers, this system also has serious implications for labour mobility within the province of Quebec.

I know this issue has been raised several times, on barriers, and it's one that's been resurrected on and off for the past 15 years, especially during tough economic times. During difficult times, the construction industry is one of the hardest hit, but there are more beneficial, effective and long-term ways of assisting these groups. Through other government initiatives, such as Jobs Ontario Capital, we are encouraging infrastructure development and improvement programs such as these for the long-term benefit of workers in Ontario and for the province.

Retaliatory actions such as taken in New Brunswick were a reaction to the higher unemployment rates in New Brunswick than in Quebec, and they only succeed in creating further problems.

Ontario needs to remain competitive within Canada and on the global market. We have supported a fair and open trading environment and will continue to do so. This is for the benefit of the workers and the companies in Ontario.

Currently, we have a pilot project in eastern Ontario regarding the apprenticeship Trades Qualification Act. This requires the licensing in mandatory trades such as crane operators, plumbers and electricians. The pilot project was set up to enable the Ministry of Labour construction health and safety officers to check for proper licences on construction sites. This project will not materially change the present situation in Ontario; however, it does produce more of an awareness of interprovincial crossover.

Through the first ministers' negotiations, we will continue to encourage and enhance the growth and development of our labour force and of our province. Effective negotiations produce a more harmonious atmosphere between provinces.

Therefore, I suggest we vote against the resolution put forward by the member for Carleton until after negotiations have ceased, and instead work harder towards reaching a solution that will assist workers, encouraging mobility and access.

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): I just want to tell you today that I don't think the Conservatives know what negotiations mean or how to negotiate.

Presently, before us, we have an opportunity to negotiate with all the first ministers and all the provinces of Canada to resolve these interprovincial trade barrier problems that we have. Yet they still raise in this Legislature a resolution—Mr Sterling does—that may jeopardize, indeed may scuttle the negotiations. Obviously, they don't understand negotiations.

I want to applaud the member for Kitchener-Wilmot because I think his suggestion to have an amendment to the resolution that says failing the successful negotiations we adopt the resolution Mr Sterling has presented is a good idea.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Carleton, you have two minutes.

Mr Sterling: I appreciate the vigour and the enthusiasm in this debate.

This is a serious problem in eastern Ontario. I want to read to you the February statistics with regard to the construction trade. Electricians: vacancies, 5; people on UI, 271, and there are another 500 out of work. Carpenters: vacancies, 3; UI claims, 429. Roofers: 3 vacancies; 73 people on UI. Plumbers: 7 vacancies; 148 on UI. Construction labourers: 5 jobs in February in eastern Ontario; 1,611 on UI. That doesn't count the people who were off UI.

My resolution, as I said in my opening remarks, if you read the first line and you read the last line, says we don't want to have to do this, but the fact of the matter is that all of this pap and talk I've heard from the government benches that, "Let's go back and talk about this some more"—in 1976, the Minister of Labour, Bette Stephenson, went to Quebec and talked to them and was negotiating.

In 1976, 14 years ago, they were talking and negotiating about it. We've negotiated for 14 years. We now have somebody in this country, Frank McKenna, who's shown some leadership and said, "Quebec, you're going to come to the table and you're going to negotiate in good faith to get rid of these restrictions, these unfair, discriminatory practices."

My resolution simply would arm your minister with a card that she might be able to play this summer during those discussions. She could say to the other ministers: "Ontario is fed up. We want a fair deal for our workers. We want a fair deal for our contractors."

I urge you to support this resolution.

EASTERN ONTARIO ECONOMY

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will deal first with ballot item 5 standing in the name of Mr Cleary. If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the "nays" have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The bells rang from 1200 to 1205.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Cleary has moved private member's resolution 4. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until your name is called.

Ayes

Arnott, Bradley, Cleary, Cunningham, Daigeler, Drainville, Harris, Kormos, McLean, Miclash, Morrow, Runciman, Sterling, Villeneuve, Wilson (Simcoe West).

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until your name is called.

Nays

Abel, Carter, Cooper, Dadamo, Farnan, Frankford, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Hope, Jackson, Jamison, Johnson (Don Mills), Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Lessard, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martin, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), Owens, Perruzza, Rizzo, Stockwell, Sutherland, Tilson, Waters, Wessinger, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wiseman.

The Deputy Speaker: The ayes are 15; the nays are 34. I declare the motion lost.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We will now deal with ballot item 6, standing in the name of Mr Sterling. If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; this will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1209 to 1212.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Sterling has moved private member's resolution number 7. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until your names are called.

Ayes

Arnott, Bradley, Cleary, Cunningham, Daigeler, Drainville, Farnan, Frankford, Hansen, Harrington, Harris, Hayes, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), Kormos, Lessard, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Martin, McLean, Miclash, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), Perruzza, Rizzo, Runciman, Ruprecht, Sterling, Stockwell, Sutherland, Tilson, Villeneuve, Waters, Wessenger, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wilson (Simcoe West), Winninger, Wiseman.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until your names are called.

Nays

Abel, Carter, Cooper, Haeck, Hope, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Marchese, Mills, Owens.

The Deputy Speaker: The ayes are 38; the nays are 10. I declare the motion carried.

All matters related to private members' public business have been completed. I do now leave the chair, and the House will resume at 1:30.

The House recessed at 1217.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NEWBRIDGE NETWORKS CORP

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): Liberals are interested to get the economy going again. We want to help business people create jobs so Ontarians can get back to work. That's why I am particularly proud to salute a businessman from the Ottawa-Carleton area who has created, for the second time in his life, a huge success story.

I'm quoting here from an article on April 18 in the *Ottawa Citizen*:

"Newbridge Networks was the leading growth stock on major US exchanges last year. How did a small Ottawa-area high-technology firm become the darling of North American markets? And can the company, which makes the electronic brains behind large telecommunications networks, keep up the momentum? Many industry watchers say yes. 'It's not just a Canadian success story—it's a global success story,' said the analyst with the Baltimore-based brokerage firm Alex Brown."

This is indeed a huge, worldwide success story. I am proud that four years ago in 1989 I visited Newbridge, together with the former Minister of Revenue, Remo Mancini. Why were we there? Because Newbridge, in its early beginnings, took advantage of the Ontario small business development corporation program to raise capital. So let's be proud of Terry Matthews and all his workers at Newbridge, and let's also be proud that the Ontario government five years ago helped this company start on the road to worldwide success.

Interjection.

Mr Daigeler: Five years—who was the Premier?

TVONTARIO

M. Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & Grenville-Est) : Comme mes collègues vont le faire et l'ont déjà fait, j'aimerais moi aussi rendre hommage à la contribution des conseillers consultatifs de TVOntario.

Je peux vous dire que dans ma région, le conseil de la région de l'Est et le conseil francophone représentent admirablement bien les besoins de leurs collectivités auprès du conseil de direction de TVOntario. En effet, ils ont joué un rôle capital à faire accroître l'accessibilité aux deux réseaux de TVO et La Chaîne. Ils ont réussi à bien faire connaître l'importance du télédiffuseur éducatif au sein de leurs conseils scolaires.

La présence de TVOntario sera encore plus évidente le mois prochain alors que La Chaîne de TVO jouera un rôle de premier plan dans la Semaine franco-ontarienne et diffusera l'émission *Panorama* à partir d'ici, Queen's Park.

Par contre, il est absolument primordial pour TVOn-

tario et La Chaîne de reconsidérer l'heure de la rediffusion de la période de questions à l'Assemblée législative. Cette rediffusion est regardée par beaucoup plus de gens que nous le croyons, et je crois sincèrement que nous inciterons beaucoup plus de téléspectateurs si l'heure de diffusion pouvait se faire entre 9 heures et 11 heures au lieu de minuit et demi.

Chapeau ! à ces bénévoles qui donnent généreusement de leur temps et de leurs efforts pour assurer que TVO et La Chaîne reflètent fidèlement les besoins de nos citoyens.

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): I also rise today to pay tribute to TVOntario, an outstanding educational broadcaster. All citizens of Ontario, including members of this House, enjoy and benefit from the exceptional educational programming TVOntario serves up each day through its English- and French-language channels, TVO and La Chaîne.

TVOntario's commitment to high-quality educational programming is particularly noteworthy in this Education and Training Week.

Today, though, I will focus on the outstanding work done by TVOntario's 90 advisory councillors. This dedicated group of volunteers is drawn from every corner of the province, all walks of life and many social and ethnic backgrounds. These people do everything in their power to ensure TVOntario is successful in its quest to bring top-quality programming to their communities. The councillors raise funds, speak to service clubs, contribute to community events, assist local teachers and advise TVOntario's board of directors.

They will gather this weekend in the northern community of Sioux Lookout to discuss ways of ensuring TVOntario's programs and services reflect the needs of Ontario's diverse population. In particular, they will be exploring how TVOntario can help people living in isolated, remote northern communities, many of which are aboriginal.

I urge other members of the House to encourage constituents with an interest in education programming to keep in touch with their local TVOntario advisory councillor. All viewers will benefit if this important line of communication is kept open.

I would like to add that I am a proud member of the Friends of TVOntario steering committee. Stay tuned in the near future for more statements on TVOntario by the other members of the House.

MANITOULIN FERRY SERVICE

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): Good afternoon, Mr Speaker. Spring is in full bloom on Manitoulin Island and the north shore of Lake Huron. Last week, the *Chi-Cheemaun* commenced sailing its normal route from Tobermory to South Baymouth.

On behalf of the people and businesses of Manitoulin and the north shore, I invite members of this House and all Ontarians to come and visit our area for its renowned scenery, great hospitality and just friendly folks. The people of Manitoulin and the north shore are ready, eager and thrilled to welcome you.

Unfortunately, this summer the ferry service has been reduced. The Chi-Cheemaun's little sister, the Nindawayma, has been mothballed by Bob Rae. Bob Rae doesn't believe that the improved service of two ferries helps the area's tourist economy. Bob Rae believes that travellers waiting four hours between ferries is better than waiting two hours.

The Manitoulin Tourist Association, the Manitoulin Municipal Association, numerous chambers of commerce in the north, including the Elliot Lake chamber of commerce, don't share Bob Rae's view.

Put the Nindawayma back in service, Bob, or the Nindawayma tied up in Owen Sound will be a symbol that this government is like the Nindawayma: dead in the water.

MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Mr Dave Johnson (Don Mills): Less than two weeks ago the Finance minister announced to municipalities cuts in the unconditional grants. Municipalities have been in a state of shock since that time as they try to reassess their budgets.

Many municipalities have worked exceedingly hard over the past number of years to bring in lean budgets. Many succeeded. Many got to a 0% property tax increase this year through efficiencies, through reducing services and through downsizing. It takes planning, sound judgement and an awareness of the economic climate to make this happen. Municipalities have been practising restraint for some time.

But considering the timing of this announcement, one must ask, where was the planning on the part of this government? Where is the partnership? Municipalities are understandably concerned when faced with cuts after their budgets have been set, and set for some time, and tax bills prepared.

Was it not possible to be upfront with municipalities and to respect their budget time frame? If municipalities are required to bring provincial budgets under control, then so be it, but consultation, and even more importantly consultation on a timely basis, would make the process more harmonious for all concerned.

Is this the type of timing, the type of planning, the type of partnership that municipalities can expect in the future?

FAMILY OF THE YEAR AWARD

Mr George Dadamo (Windsor-Sandwich): I rise in the Legislature today to honour two people who reside in the town of La Salle, an area which grows in popularity and is fast becoming the home of many Windsorites, by the way.

Many awards are given for many different reasons, and awards are bestowed for obvious reasons. In the town of La Salle comes an award which is the beginning of something I think is entirely new. The award is called the Family of the Year. It has landed on the front porch this year of Albert and Lucy Moore, who I know are viewing the proceedings this afternoon. I spoke with Mrs Moore yesterday.

Lucy and Albert Moore and their five sons were recently named Family of the Year by the Knights of Columbus of Sacred Heart Council 9500.

I'd like to furnish you with a bit of background on the Moores. Albert has been the president of the St Vincent de Paul Society of La Salle and for 36 years has been a Knights of Columbus member involved in the La Salle youth centre. Albert Moore will not join a club or organization unless he can do something for others. A jovial man, Albert is not motivated by awards. He certainly doesn't perform kindness for any applause or any accolades.

On the other side of this award is Lucy Moore, who began the La Salle friendship centre more than 20 years ago and has seen the membership rise to 325. Her family acknowledges that volunteer centres have a way of finding her.

I'd like to wish many thanks to the Moores and gratitude from the town of La Salle, Mayor Vince Marcotte and myself for being chosen the Family of the Year in La Salle.

1340

CANADA 125 AWARDS

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): This evening I have the honour of presenting the Canada 125 Award to 25 wonderful people who have devoted countless volunteer hours in my riding of Eglinton. North Toronto is truly fortunate to have so many people who have committed so much of their time and energy to benefit our community. These individuals have helped seniors and adolescents, churches and schools, tenants and home owners, the physically challenged and the economically depressed.

Each one of these 25 people is talented and committed to improving his community for the good of all. They have been instrumental in the development of the Health Station, the North Toronto Memorial Community Centre, community associations, youth groups, sports organizations and advocacy groups.

The individuals receiving awards tonight are Phil Aber, Tim Arnaud, Howard Birnie, Robert Blakely, Fran Brown, Howard Brown, Jane Bunting, Barbara Coupal, Les Davis, Freda Finley, Mackenzie Hall, Anne Johnston, Susan Kee, Marg Ann Loughheed, Cynthia Luks, Charlotte Maher, Jannie Mills, Diana Morgulis, Nan Percival, Clarke Pulford, Don Ritchie, Agnes Roy, Julia Wallis, Audrey Wilson and John Withrow.

On behalf of the people of Eglinton riding, I would like to express our enormous gratitude to these individuals for their invaluable contributions to north Toronto.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): It's no wonder Ontario's seniors feel they are being asked to carry the weight of NDP government mismanagement. Seniors waited three years for the government's long-term care reforms only to find out that, under Bill 101, their extended care health services will be delisted as an insured benefit under OHIP, to be replaced with a two-tier system determined and controlled by civil servants. Access for seniors will be further reduced through the NDP eligibility criteria to determine which seniors might obtain future health services. All this while the NDP is considering opening Ontario hospitals to wealthy Americans.

The NDP Treasurer's mini-budget will arbitrarily cut, without consultation, seniors' benefits under the Ontario drug benefit plan, forcing them to pay increased user fees while welfare abusers will still be getting their drugs free.

The NDP mini-budget cuts to municipalities create a \$500-million shortfall that will have to be made up by huge property tax increases, which are harmful to seniors on fixed incomes, since their ability to pay isn't acknowledged. Seniors remember recent NDP cuts to the Ontario property tax grant, which offset rising school board taxes.

Rather than making seniors its favourite target, the NDP should target inappropriate government spending: reduce welfare fraud, halt the misuse of the Ontario drug benefit plan and stop OHIP cheaters with bogus cards.

As elected representatives, we have an obligation to respect the contributions of our seniors. They certainly deserve better from this government.

BOWMANVILLE ROTARY CLUB

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I rise today to apprise members of the Legislature of the Rotary International worldwide project Save the Planet Earth. The project covers tree planting, environmental education, clean water and clean air. This international project was implemented by over 1.161 million Rotarians in 26,000 clubs in 187 countries.

I want to speak directly to the efforts of the Rotary Club of Bowmanville in my riding of Durham East. In 1991 the Bowmanville Rotary Club planted 23,000 trees, in 1992 they planted 25,000 trees, and in 1993 they planted 20,500.

To carry out this task, the Rotary Club enlisted the support of local schools and organized the children into teams. The positive and enthusiastic attitude displayed by the children is something that everyone could use as an example, in particular members of the opposition

parties who appear to be preoccupied with doomsday philosophy. They should take an example from the children in my riding.

The Rotary International and the Rotary Clubs in my riding of Durham East deserve our congratulations for the valuable lesson being taught to our children through this program. Everybody over there should take an example from the children in my riding. They're enthusiastic, positive and upbeat, which you are not.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

DRIVERS' LICENCES PERMIS DE CONDUIRE

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): I'm pleased to inform the House of an important safety initiative this government has taken to protect the lives of Ontarians and help make our roads the very safest in North America. Today I'm announcing that the government will implement a graduated licensing system for all new drivers beginning next fall, the fall of 1994.

We're doing this after much consultation and discussion with and support from citizens and groups concerned with safety. I would especially like to thank the Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, Ontario's chief coroner, the Insurance Bureau of Canada and, of course, the Ministry of Transportation and its staff.

I know that all members of this House take very seriously the fact that driving is not a right but a privilege. It's a privilege that must be earned by demonstrating both driving skills and knowledge of the rules of the road. Members may be aware that the Ministry of Transportation in Ontario issues more than 350,000 new drivers' licences each year and that no other province sets tougher standards for testing and licensing than Ontario does.

But there is overwhelming statistical evidence that inexperienced drivers pose a very serious safety threat, a threat not just to themselves but to other people on the roads. Traffic collisions are the leading killer of people between the ages of 16 and 24 in Ontario. But the statistics show that all new drivers, regardless of their age, have a much higher collision rate than experienced drivers.

Safety experts in Ontario and around the world agree that for new drivers, the likelihood of becoming involved in a collision is greatly reduced if the new driver gains experience gradually, in conditions where the risks are low, of course. Many studies have concluded that it takes between two and five years of driving to develop all the skills and judgement needed to avoid collisions.

Je sais que tous mes collègues sont aussi inquiets que moi quand ils lisent dans les journaux — ceux du lundi matin, par exemple — et qu'ils prennent connaissance

du nombre de décès sur nos routes au cours de la fin de semaine, un nombre, hélas ! trop grand.

Un trop grand nombre comprend les nouveaux conducteurs, surtout les jeunes entre 16 et 24 ans, qui sont surreprésentés, qui représente à peu près le double de la moyenne ontarienne. Le système que nous proposons vise à réduire de façon significative ces chiffres.

The two-level licensing system will allow new drivers to gain valuable "hands-on" driving experience. This will be accomplished by gradually granting driving privileges during the first two years on the road.

For example, level 1 drivers will have to maintain a zero blood alcohol level. They must not drive between midnight and 5 am and will be restricted from driving on the 400 series of highways and other designated urban expressways. Furthermore, level 1 drivers may not carry more passengers than seat belts available and must display a sign indicating the vehicle is being driven by a novice driver. At all times in the first level, the driver must be accompanied by a class G driver with at least four years' driving experience and who has less than 0.05 blood alcohol level. This means one drink only, no more than that, and for the new driver, none at all.

Level 1 will last 12 months, but drivers will have the opportunity to have that reduced to eight months if they successfully complete an approved driver education course. You take the course, you save four months.

1350

To enter the second level of the program, all new drivers will be required to pass a basic test on driving skills with a government driving examiner. Level 2 will last a minimum of 12 months. At this level there are more driving privileges, but blood alcohol and passenger limitations will remain.

At the end of level 2, drivers will have to pass an advanced test, focusing on their ability to recognize and take appropriate actions when presented with hazardous conditions, before receiving their full licence privileges.

A licensing system with similar conditions and limits will also be implemented for all first-time motorcycle drivers in the province.

Because graduated licensing is a subject of great interest to many Ontarians and because this government is committed to establishing the fairest and most effective of graduated licensing, I'm tabling a draft bill in the House today. The bill will then go to a standing committee of the House for review during the summer months. Everyone of course will be invited to participate.

Making our roads safer is a responsibility we all share. We welcome further comments to improve our graduated licensing program proposal. We are seeking input into our program to ensure the final legislation for the program reflects the best possible system for all Ontarians.

Mes collègues le savent : Modifier le système actuel

de délivrance des permis afin de mettre de l'avant un système de délivrance graduelle de permis est une importante tâche administrative pour mon ministère. Notre but est de présenter la loi à l'automne et de mettre en oeuvre le programme de délivrance graduelle des permis de conduire pas plus tard qu'au printemps 1994.

We do not propose these restrictions on new drivers lightly. In 1991 more than 1,100 people were killed on the roads of Ontario and more than 90,000 people were injured. In the past decade alone, the past 10 years, more than 13,000 Ontarians lost their lives. Graduated licensing is not about government interference; it's about lives.

My honourable colleague the Chair of Management Board will also be addressing the issue of road safety today and the impact collisions have on Ontario residents. The timing of his statement is not coincidence. Rather, it recognizes the government's commitment to road safety and it builds on our commitment to ensure the quality of life for all Ontario residents.

L'amélioration de la sécurité routière épargnera des vies, mais elle épargnera aussi des coûts d'assurance, des coûts de santé, et du temps perdu à l'école et au travail. Ces coûts sont évalués à non moins que 4 milliards de dollars pour toute la population ontarienne.

A strategy for improving safety has been designed to improve the quality of life in Ontario without increasing the public debt or imposing costs on future generations. This safety vision will be realized through education, awareness, enforcement and legislation. Implementation of our strategy focuses on three key areas that directly influence safety. These key areas are drivers, vehicles and the road.

I know that the vast majority of Ontarian residents support graduated licensing and I know that this goes beyond partisan politics. Members of the Legislature from all parties, including my honourable colleagues the member for York Mills and the member for Nepean, have demonstrated their support for graduated licensing. I look forward to the continuing support and cooperation of all members as we move forward to implementing graduated licensing.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): It's with great pleasure that I rise today to inform the House of important progress in the government's program to reform and improve Ontario's automobile insurance system. I have two announcements. Both involve measures we are taking to protect the rights of accident victims.

The first deals specifically with initiatives to ensure fairer treatment of people injured in automobile accidents. I'm releasing today the report of the Task Force on Rehabilitation and Long-Term Care Benefits, which I commissioned earlier this year to address a range of issues concerning adequate care for accident victims and

the need for a system of cost control.

This report represents a remarkable achievement in that it contains nearly 100 recommendations which have been unanimously forwarded by a diverse group of people. The task force comprised individuals with a broad range of interests, from organizations representing the insurance industry, consumer groups, accident victims and rehabilitation specialists.

Among the many issues addressed by the task force there are recommendations to increase the current monthly cap on attendant care from \$3,000 to \$10,000 for catastrophic injuries and to move the current lifetime limit on supplementary medical and rehabilitation benefits from \$500,000 to \$1 million.

The task force proposes a comprehensive framework for rehabilitation and identifies a number of areas where regulation is required to clarify obligations and responsibilities on the part of insurers, injured persons and professionals. Taken together, the report's proposals are designed to ensure a systematic approach to the provision of benefits by establishing mechanisms for both cost control and standards of care.

I consider it a significant accomplishment that this group of individuals came together and worked in a commonsense, practical fashion to build a consensus around a series of difficult issues which have been at the centre of concerns expressed by both the insurance industry and by accident victims.

It is precisely these concerns which in the past have generated a great deal of debate. The industry saw uncontrolled pressures and expressed alarm at the potential impact on premiums if there was no action taken to contain costs. Accident victims have insisted on their right to adequate rehabilitation and long-term care.

The government has always shared these concerns and is determined to take appropriate action. The convening of this task force represented an essential step forward in bringing together and reconciling interests which do not have to be in conflict. I am now pleased to see that its report points the way towards a constructive regulatory reform and, in doing so, clears a path for everyone involved.

I will be reviewing the recommendations to determine those which require adoption as regulations under the Insurance Act. But I want to emphasize that, as with all aspects of the government reform strategy, we will continue with an open process and will be seeking further input and feedback on these recommendations.

My second announcement concerns our commitment to improved claimant advocacy within the auto insurance system. I am pleased to report that Professor Harry Arthurs of Osgoode Hall Law School has accepted my invitation to review advocacy services available to auto accident victims who claim benefits under the Insurance Act. Professor Arthurs, former president of York Univer-

sity, will be consulting insurers, the legal profession and accident victims' groups in the course of his review.

I would like to add one final point, Mr Speaker. As you know, improved rehabilitation and care for accident victims are key goals of Bill 164, our auto insurance reform legislation. Once Bill 164 passes third reading, it will provide the legislative framework for fairer treatment of those injured in traffic accidents, especially those suffering severe and long-term injuries.

We heard earlier from my colleague the Minister of Transportation. His statement concerning graduated drivers' licences is important in its own right, of course. But in addition, it affirms the commitment of this government to a comprehensive approach to the related issues of road safety and the protection of accident victims. In this context, the government's reform process is thorough, forward-looking and sets a course that will benefit all Ontario drivers on the road ahead.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance):

Yesterday I received a report from the Deputy Minister of Health, Michael Decter, on the progress of our negotiations of a new social contract. As members of this House will know, Mr Decter is the province's chief negotiator at these talks. Mr Decter advises me that there are grounds for optimism and that a number of parties to these negotiations are making progress.

These are historic negotiations. Our goal, announced on April 5 by Premier Rae, is to meet the fiscal challenge which faces us in a fair and constructive way. On April 23 our proposals for a social contract were shared with all of the public sector employers and employee groups. As one element of our plan, we are asking workers and employers to help us come up with ways of trimming our total compensation bill for the public service and the broader public service by \$2 billion in 1993-94.

However, we cannot expect people to make this sacrifice without addressing issues of significant importance to their own security. Consequently, our government wants to negotiate provisions which speak to assuring full participation in decisions about government restructuring, about designing and implementing plans for the retraining and reskilling of employees and about redeployment of affected employees.

I am confident that with the help and cooperation of everyone involved in this, the process will work. But this is a very large and complex undertaking, and therefore it is understandable that Michael Decter and his team have asked for more time to conclude this task. We have agreed to this request and have approved a mandate and set a deadline of June 4 for the achievement of a framework social contract agreement.

1400

This decision will not interfere with the tabling of our

1993 budget. I would like to advise the House that I will present the 1993 Ontario budget to this Legislature on Wednesday, May 19, at 4 pm.

Without divulging any of the details, I can tell the members that the document which I will table on May 19 will reflect three very important commitments. We remain committed to investing in jobs and people, including capital investment in such economically important infrastructure as roads, transit and telecommunications. We are committed to preserving our most important services, such as health care, education and social programs. And we are also aware that in order to do these things, we must manage our finances and restrain the growth of debt.

Our budget will keep the deficit to under \$10 billion. We will achieve that through a three-pronged strategy. First, our spending plans will reflect the \$4 billion in expenditure control measures for 1993-94 which we outlined in detail on April 23. Second, the budget will also incorporate \$2 billion in savings to be achieved through the social contract in 1993-94. Third, on the revenue side, it will include a fair and balanced package of tax increases to help put us on a sound financial footing. That is how we will continue to invest in jobs and maintain vital public services.

In March, I announced that unless we took action on both the revenue and spending side, our deficit for 1993-94 could reach almost \$17 billion. I also said that we could not let that happen, because if we did, interest costs would very quickly eat into our budget to the point where all our programs would be at risk.

The people of Ontario realize that the burden of deficit reduction has to be shared. It's not a problem that belongs to just one group—not just to teachers or doctors or to social assistance recipients or to businesses. It belongs to all of us, and we must all contribute to its solution. That's why our budget will contain measures on both the expenditure and revenue side.

Our expenditure control plan touches every ministry and agency, every region of the province. We're changing the way government does business in this province through the most comprehensive review any government in Ontario has ever carried out. Because we've changed the very nature of what we do and how we do it, the savings will continue into the future.

Sharing the burden also means sitting down and talking with our public sector workers and employers to draw up a new social contract that will shape the way the public sector works in Ontario.

It also means asking the people of Ontario to contribute through tax measures, but only after we have shown that we're serious about making better use of the money we spend, making every dollar go farther. That's why the first step in our budget process was to identify \$4 billion in savings, the biggest chunk of that from our

own operations in government.

In sum, the budget will allow us to invest in jobs, protect our most vital services and preserve the financial strength of this province, and it will do it in a way that is fair and equitable to all.

DRIVERS' LICENCES

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): Honestly, I would have liked to be really positive about the Transportation minister's announcement on graduated licences. This is a very important issue, one that will save many lives, especially among our young people. So I would have liked to be very positive and support the minister.

However, where's the legislation? Really, what the minister is doing is putting forward a consultation paper. He has said himself that this initiative at best will be in place a year from now, fall 1994.

Let me remind the minister of a London Free Press article dated November 10, 1989. "The province is considering a new system of licensing new drivers that would restrict when and where they may drive until they gain experience," Transportation minister William Wrye said Thursday." He said that in response to a question from myself, because at that point, in the fall of 1989, I was concerned about the carnage on our roads among young people.

So the minister has had almost three years—in fact over three years—to bring in legislation, to table it today for first reading, so we could have consultations over the summer and pass it in the fall. Minister, where's the legislation so we can end the carnage on our roads among our young people?

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I welcome the release today of the report of the long-term care and rehab task force with respect to the operation of auto insurance in the province. I think it would have been interesting to have had a much more balanced report issued under the terms of the previous legislation, to take in a whole series of ramifications about the operation of the Ontario motorist protection plan.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): And whose legislation was that?

Mr Elston: While the member for Windsor-Riverside, the former government House leader, chirps about, "Whose legislation was that?" I tell him that I am responsible for the OMPP legislation, and it would have been well had we been able to have a reasonable and logical review of some of the problem areas. There is no question that this will add to the program as it is now, and I welcome that, because in any forum where there is a scheme set forth that is designed to protect people, it must be able to be evolved and moved so that it meets the changing needs of our client group, the people of this province.

I look forward to addressing the continuation of the

clause-by-clause on Bill 164 as it begins next week in committee, but it would be nice if we knew by then exactly what were considered to be important steps forward under the recommendations put before us here on this task force, and we hope that the minister will come forward so that we can see the full operation of his plan as he perceives it under Bill 164.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I want to respond to the Minister of Finance's announcement on the budget to say that I think we now have a clearer picture of what that budget will contain. I will say to the Minister of Finance, as we've said before, we think that the deficit now, with no new taxes, is around \$9 billion. I know that you may choose to disagree, but when we now see you have confirmed the social contract, you've confirmed the expenditure reduction program, we think you've grossly overstated the interest costs, we think you will have the fiscal stabilization money in there and we think there will be \$1 billion worth of assets.

I would also say that I think the most contentious part will be taxes. Already in your budget, already in the numbers you released, are revenue increases due to taxes of about \$1.7 billion. Without any new taxes, the provincial government is taking about \$1.7 billion worth of increased taxes out of the people of Ontario. So tax revenue is going up about 5%, \$1.7 billion, before any of Premier Rae's new taxes. I think the people of Ontario have to realize that, that the Premier and the Treasurer are planning to add more taxes, and already, \$1.7 billion of increased taxes are coming out of the taxpayers of Ontario.

I understand the financial difficulties of the government, but I will just say to the Premier and to the Minister of Finance that we are facing a very delicate economic situation. In our judgement, taking more than \$1.7 billion in more tax revenue out of the economy of Ontario runs the very real risk, Premier, of stalling the economic recovery right in its tracks.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I wish to comment on the statement by the Treasurer today. First of all, in response to the Liberal Party talking about its estimate of the deficit, well, it's no wonder they thought they had a balanced budget before they called the election in 1990 and were sitting there with a \$3-billion or \$5-billion deficit.

Mr Speaker, here are the things that concern me. Can you imagine a \$10-billion target being acceptable? This is how low we have sunk in this province of Ontario.

Secondly, tax hikes: the Treasurer indicating that tax hikes, he thinks, are acceptable. The Liberals think this "may" slow recovery. This will devastate job creation in the province of Ontario—not may: This will be a disaster in the province of Ontario.

1410

Third, I want to comment about the fact that you plan to introduce the budget the day before the House recesses for 10 days. Presumably, I suppose you don't want to give the opposition very much time to respond. There's no need why this budget couldn't be presented tomorrow. You've been delaying. They've been delaying for these social contract talks, and I want to comment on the social contract talks, because finally we have the deadline. I've been calling for you to toughen up and, quite frankly, I think you have toughened up and I thank you for that. You set a deadline: not one day more.

Number two, I read the Premier's comments last night. Maybe I'm the only one left that's going to be fighting for the brothers and the sisters, but I heard what the Premier told them: "Not negotiable," he said.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Harris: All I would say to you today is that we have not had one day of meaningful negotiations until we get tough and say, "There's a deadline, and we're going to proceed with or without you." Let me say to the Treasurer we support you stating clearly that in this budget you are proceeding with or without the unions. Now, possibly, if Mr Ryan thinks you really are tough enough and you will legislate, now maybe we can have some meaningful negotiations.

DRIVERS' LICENCES

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I'm responding to the Minister of Transportation's statement on graduated licences. Of course the Conservative Party is delighted to have graduated licences announced. However, I will say to the minister that he is very well aware that on many occasions I have urged him to bring in graduated licences. I brought in a request for an opposition day, 123 designation study in committee of this issue, and you have consistently blocked the way by suggesting you were just about to introduce it.

Minister, you have been the minister of this ministry for almost two years now. You have constantly said that you were consulting. By this time, you should have been ready to bring forward legislation. Surely we should have this legislation before the House rises for the summer. By your own numbers, more than 1,000 people per year are killed as a result of auto accidents.

Minister, you will get no problem from our party, but to suggest that you're bringing forward meaningful legislation when you're talking about limiting the number of passengers to those who have seat belts—in case you don't know, Minister, that is the law. I would much sooner see the fact that we would limit it to one passenger in the front seat, which would be a much safer driving practice.

Too little, too late, Minister.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): A brief statement to the minister's comments with respect to auto insurance. He's announced a series of reports and task forces and he's going to change the regulations. I find this simply amazing, that we spent hundreds of hours reviewing Bill 164 and the regulations that have gone on before it, and thousands of dollars have been spent by people who have come to the committee to prepare for all of this, and now you're going to announce a commission or a task force and you're releasing a report, and then you're going to consult with people with respect to the regulations.

I would have hoped the minister would be announcing either the delaying or the cancelling of Bill 164, the withdrawal of 164. This is absolutely no excuse, to simply say you're going to start talking about a whole new bureaucracy of advocates to replace the lawyers in this province. How are you going to train them? Where are you going to get the money to do it?

MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): Mr Speaker, I rise today on a point of privilege concerning the behaviour of the Premier. It involves two separate occasions on which he has violated my privileges as a member of this House, and one occasion in which the privileges of the House were violated by the Premier and the Attorney General and senior officials within the Ministry of the Attorney General.

I'll try to be as brief as possible, but given the seriousness of the second breach of privilege, I would ask you to take time to consider it in more detail and report back to the House.

The first breach of my personal privileges relates to a question that I asked on Tuesday, April 27, of the Premier. At that time I asked the Premier and members of his personal staff to sign freedom of information waivers which would permit the Ontario Provincial Police to release portions of the John Piper report that discussed the activities of those senior members of the Premier's office and of the Premier himself.

At that time, the Premier indicated that he would "take a look at what the member is suggesting and have a look at the precedents...and will take his question as notice." In his answer to a supplementary question he restated this position, saying again that he would not make "any other further comment except to say, as I said, that I take his question as notice."

Since that question was asked, the Premier has had five sitting days to respond to my question. There is a disturbing pattern here, where cabinet ministers indicate that they will take questions on notice but never do so.

I draw your attention to another question I asked of the Minister of Health on April 29 about the release of a sexual offender from the Kingston Psychiatric Hospital without the police being informed. Again, the minister

said she would take the question on notice and respond "at the earliest possible time." Neither the Premier nor his minister has done so.

Mr Speaker, on this first point, I feel my privileges as a member have been breached. While the standing orders clearly indicate that ministers may refuse to answer questions, taking questions on notice is a long-standing practice in this Legislature, and when ministers renege on these agreements, it violates the privileges of the member who asked the question and reduces the ability of members of the House to perform their duties.

My second point of privilege is even more serious and concerns the activities of the Premier in a briefing that he received on the John Piper report from Mr Murray Segal, the director of the crown law office, criminal division, in the Ministry of the Attorney General. Normally, Mr Speaker, judgements about the appropriateness of such a briefing would not fall within your jurisdiction as Speaker because your rulings on parliamentary privilege are limited to activities that occur within the Legislative Assembly itself.

However, I believe that there is evidence to suggest that you do have responsibility to act on this matter. You will be aware that section 5 of the 1969 Attorney General's act is a broad section that discusses various functions of the Attorney General. However, in order to add interpretive weight to that section, the Attorney General of the day, who introduced the bill, the Honourable Arthur Wishart, said that the Legislative Assembly itself has a role to ensure that the Attorney General has conformed with the act. I quote Mr Wishart from Hansard on March 17, 1969, page 2328:

"One can only set forth in the best and clearest possible language guidelines to the Attorney General's duties and responsibilities and then trust that he will carry them out. And then this House, which perhaps is not the government, in the sense that Parliament is not the government, would see that he did his duties."

This view that the Legislative Assembly has a responsibility to monitor the activities of the Attorney General's office was reinforced in the Royal Commission Inquiry into Civil Rights, known as the McRuer Commission. It stated on page 934:

"The members of the public must be dependent on the vigilance of the Attorney General for their protection against legislative invasion of their civil rights. Departments of government must realize in advising on legislation and advising departments, the Attorney General has a duty that transcends government policy, in the performance of which he is responsible only to the Legislature."

The briefing of the Premier by Mr Segal is unprecedented in the sense that the report involved the activities of the Premier and his communications with Mr Ferguson and Mr Piper. The Premier cannot enjoy his normal

crown privileges as Premier when he himself was a subject in a police investigation. We know that a police report can only be released to private citizens or their solicitors through the freedom of information office. We also know that normally only executive summaries of such reports can be provided to the Premier in regular cases.

I put it to you, Mr Speaker, that both the Premier and Mr Segal violated the privileges of members of the Legislature, and would ask that you rule on this unprecedented breach of those privileges. If, Mr Speaker, you find that Mr Segal did violate the privileges of members of the assembly through his inappropriate briefing of the Premier, who was one of several subjects in a police investigation, I intend to introduce a motion asking this assembly to call Mr Segal before the bar of this House.

Mr Speaker, while you may be aware that this practice of calling someone before the bar has not occurred for over 80 years in Ontario, it was used in the federal Parliament less than two years ago. It is essential that the justice system in this province be fair and be seen to be fair for all. The serious breach of our privileges committed by the Premier is something he will have to answer for to you and to members of this assembly. However, it is also essential that Mr Segal, who has directly violated the privileges, not only of members, but may have also indirectly affected others in the entire Grandview controversy, be called to account for his misconduct.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): To the honourable member for Leeds-Grenville, first may I say that I appreciate the way in which he has brought his concern to the floor of the House and to my attention. I will be pleased indeed to take a look at the matters which he raised and to report back to him at the earliest possible time.

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ORAL QUESTIONS

LABOUR RELATIONS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. Premier, we have learned in a very recent newscast that the unions have said they will not sit down at your social contract talks with your negotiator until they have met with you. I want to ask you, Premier, what does this latest step in the dance do to your social contract negotiations? Are you prepared to sit down immediately with the unions and how are the unions' proposals likely to affect the budget to be brought in in two weeks' time?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): First of all, I appreciate the honourable member bringing us up to date with respect to a recent newscast. I would say to her very directly—

Interjection.

Hon Mr Rae: No, I would say to her and to others

that I've always made it a practice of not carrying on discussions or negotiations through the means of a newscast, or indeed, in a situation like this, on the floor of the Legislature.

All I can say to her very directly is that if the negotiator, Mr Decter, feels that my participating, being present at a session in order to clear up any procedural points or any difficulties in terms of where we're at, if that were seen to be helpful to the process, of course I would take that advice.

But I would say to the honourable member that Mr Decter has the mandate to carry out full negotiations and will continue to do so. I don't intend to get involved in the nitty-gritty of every aspect of the negotiation, but certainly my office door is open, I'm accessible and I'm quite happy to do whatever can be done to facilitate a full and open negotiation.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, we're really trying to understand, and a whole lot of people in this province are trying to understand exactly what it is that you are planning to do, that your government is trying to do as the clock keeps ticking.

We have understood from the Treasurer today that you are going to be bringing a budget in, in two weeks' time. It has been clear, from what Michael Decter said yesterday and what the Treasurer reaffirmed today, that if the social contract talks do get going, the earliest that they can reach an agreement under your deadline is now June 4, which is two weeks after the budget is to be presented.

The Treasurer has made it clear again today that the \$2 billion in cuts to be achieved through the social contract discussions are firm and that we will see those \$2 billion reflected in the budget. Those three things are the only things which seem to be clear.

Given that, Premier, can you help us to understand what is the purpose of continuing the social contract discussions that won't reach an agreement, if any agreement can be reached, until two weeks after the budget's presented?

Hon Mr Rae: The purpose of the social contract discussions is to make sure that jobs and services are protected. That's the essential purpose of the social contract discussion. The whole thrust of the social contract discussion is to ensure that there is a process through which we, all of us working in the public sector, can work through the problems and the realities that are created by the fiscal and financial and economic circumstance in which we find ourselves. That's the clear purpose of the social contract discussion.

The fact that those discussions need to take place with respect to a framework, and that indeed, in the Treasurer's announcement today, he indicates that even beyond the framework there will continue to be a need for dialogue and a way for us to work through ongoing

issues and problems, I think should be made very clear.

I say with respect to the honourable member that I think the direction and the road down which we are walking is very clear. We are determined to treat our employees fairly, we are determined to enter into a serious dialogue and discussion with them about the very real choices this government has to make and we are determined to be very clear to everyone about our determination to get our expenditure numbers firmly under control.

I think those directions were set out very clearly by the government. I think they were set out in the text of the social contract proposal which was released, I would remind the honourable member, on 23 April. So what we are doing is entirely consistent with what was set out in the April 23 document.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, the words sound fine, the goals sound fine, but what you don't seem to understand is that out there there are hospitals and school boards and colleges and universities and municipalities that have already set their budgets. Many of those agencies are so far into their budget year already that they are only going to have four months left in which they can bring about the cost reductions that your cuts are going to require. Every single delay in reaching an agreement on the social contract is giving them less flexibility. It's making it harder and harder for them to find ways to cope with the cuts. The end of this delay is going to be that it is more and more likely that the only choice people are going to have out in municipalities and school boards and hospitals is to start to lay people off.

Premier, we keep having to say: How long are you going to let what is becoming a charade just keep going on? We ask you if you will not sit down with your own public sector employees, those people whom you can bargain with, negotiate with them and give other public sector employees and their bargaining units the chance to do the same thing.

Hon Mr Rae: That's exactly what we're doing. That's exactly the framework that we've set out. I say to the honourable member with great respect, as they say, and say to her very directly, that's precisely what we're doing.

I'm not suggesting for a moment that it's easy to do or that the message is greeted with joy by a great many people who are hearing this message, but I'm telling her, as clearly as we can, that we understand the problems that are being faced by hospitals, that are being faced by school boards and that are being faced by municipalities. That's precisely why we've tried to create a process which allows them to bring forward their difficulties and problems in managing with the fiscal realities which we're all working through and allows the representatives of the workers to do the same thing.

I think that's a fair approach, I think that's a reason-

able approach and I think it's the right approach. I think it's a better approach than confrontation. I think it's a better approach than simply laying down a decree or whatever. I think it's a much wiser approach to try to bring people together and say to people—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —let's try to work this thing through. That's what we're doing. We're happy to create the process which will allow that to happen and, as I've said to you in my first answer, if I can play a constructive role in that, I'm happy to do so, but I want everyone to understand that Mr Decter has a full mandate to take direction of the negotiations and I think that's the best way to proceed.

The Speaker: New question.

Mrs McLeod: I think the Premier continually confuses discussion and building understanding and the kind of practical, effective negotiations that will allow the tough decisions to be made so that people out there can get on in coping with the kinds of cuts that they are going to be facing.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I will direct my second question to the Chairman of Management Board. Minister, earlier this week I asked a question concerning the problem of youth unemployment in this province, and I can tell you that this is an important issue, it's an issue that we are deeply concerned about and it is an issue which we are going to continue to raise in this Legislature.

I asked a question about the issue of summer employment earlier in the House to a colleague of yours, on Monday, to the Minister of Education and Training, and in response to my question the minister indicated, and I quote from Hansard, "...the moneys that have been spent traditionally within ministries plus the Jobs Ontario Youth program have not been put on hold," and he went on to say, "...there's no decision that has been made by treasury board or cabinet that would put any of these moneys on hold."

Minister, it is our information that indeed the money that is targeted for programs such as the summer Experience program or the environmental youth program—which, as you will know, are two of the largest summer employment programs that you are providing, have received no funding approvals to date.

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Minister, this is a question to you, as Chair of Management Board responsible for the flow of funding to the ministries. The first week of May is behind us, university and college students are already a full week into their summer term. Can you tell us why these programs, why the moneys for these programs and, therefore, the jobs for these students are being held up?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): Firstly, let me say that my colleague the Minister of Education and Training's response the other day has the same understanding that I have, that there are no impediments that have been put in place by the cabinet to hinder the flow of money on any of those programs.

Having said that, the member has raised some indication she appears to have, and I'll undertake to look into that, but I'm not aware of anything that is presently hindering the flow of dollars under those programs.

Mrs McLeod: I'm confused, because if there are no impediments deliberately put in place by cabinet, I can only assume that we're faced either with complete indecision or complete mismanagement and I'm not sure which conclusion to come to.

I would like to give the minister two very specific examples of what is actually happening out there so that this issue becomes a very real one for him, just as it is for the young people who are looking for jobs now, even as we raise this question in the House.

Last year the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, Minister, hired 17 summer students through government programs. This year they have been unofficially told that they can hire 13 students, but having been told repeatedly that the funding is not yet confirmed, they have chosen not to hire any students until the word comes directly to them along with the funds confirmed. Their phones are ringing off the wall with students who want to know whether they are going to have a job this summer.

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority, Minister, has received unofficial information that it can hire four students this year. Now, that's less than half the number of students they were able to hire last year, but they haven't filled even those positions because the money is not there.

So, Minister, I ask you to confirm, firstly, that there will be reductions in the numbers of students hired in the summer employment programs and, secondly, that many government agencies that traditionally hire summer students by this time of year have not hired for 1993 because the funding has simply not been confirmed.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the leader place a question, please.

Mrs McLeod: That was my question.

The Speaker: Minister?

Hon Mr Charlton: First of all, I can't confirm that there will be a reduction in the number of students because there is no intention to reduce the number of students.

Secondly, I probably would have referred this question to the Minister of Finance, except that the Leader of the Opposition made a very pointed comment that the question was for me. The Leader of the Opposition

might remember that some time ago this government set up a treasury board process and that Management Board has for two years now not been responsible for the flows of funding under this government. We are responsible for personnel matters in terms of the operation of the public service in this province. But I've undertaken, because the Leader of the Opposition insisted on directing the question to me, to look into the whole matter for her.

Mrs McLeod: Let me make it very clear. I directed the question towards the Chair of Management Board because there are programs in a number of ministries that are being affected. This is universal across this government. The commitments are made, the money doesn't flow and nothing out there is happening. There are students without jobs and they need to know if they're going to have a job.

The information that we have, to the best of our knowledge, was accurate as of this morning and, Minister, the information that we have directly contradicts the answer your colleague the Minister of Education and Training provided to my question earlier this week. Again, I quote from Hansard when the minister stated,

"In fact I remember when we specifically talked about job creation programs for young people in treasury board and we looked at the expenditure review process, those programs were specifically exempt from any reductions because" of "the same concern that you have."

After the minister makes that statement, we learn that not only is the summer Experience program being held up but the number of positions that are to be allocated is to be substantially reduced. Minister, we received this information directly from ministry officials, and ministry officials inform us that the cutbacks were indeed a consequence of your Treasurer's rather hastily announced expenditure control plan.

So, Minister, I just give you the two contrasting pieces of information. Your colleague has said that your youth employment programs have been exempt from cuts.

The Speaker: Could the leader place a question, please.

Mrs McLeod: Your ministry officials say that there have been cuts. Which is the accurate information? Will you acknowledge that programs have been cut, the funding hasn't flowed? Will you restore the funding and make sure that those jobs can be filled right now?

Hon Mr Charlton: Specifically, there have been no cuts in terms of the number of students who will be employed under these programs this summer. That was said by my colleague the other day, I've already repeated it once today and I'll repeat it again. There have been no cuts in the number of students who will be funded under these programs.

Specifically, I have undertaken to pursue the question

about whether or not there are some problems in terms of the flow of funds. We have already said we don't believe there are, but we're prepared to look into the reports that the member has referred to, and I will, as I undertook, do so.

LABOUR RELATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier. Premier, you will know that for the last few weeks, with regard to the social contract talks, I have called for you to toughen up, to be firm, to set a deadline so that Mr Ryan will know that you are serious, so that the union leaders will know they can't keep dragging out the talks or they can't put things on the table that are irrelevant.

Let me say this, Premier, that in my opinion, until today there has been no point in meeting. It's been a total waste of time because the unions had no clear sense, number one, that there was a deadline, when it was or that you were firm in your commitment that \$2 billion would come out of their payroll in 1993-94.

Now, Premier, as of today's announcement, finally the Treasurer is clear: \$2 billion will come out of the payroll costs in 1993-94. That's a good starting point to tell the unions you're serious. You've set a deadline of June 4. That also is a clear signal.

My question to you is, Premier, if through the negotiations you do not agree on the one item that you said is on the table, that is how will the \$2 billion come out, and that is indeed what should be negotiated, what happens if there is no agreement by June 4? Do you do it unilaterally, do you legislate or does the budget go out the window?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): First of all, let me just tell you that the one thing that doesn't happen is that the budget goes out the window. The budget is a statement to the people of the province of the financial direction of the government. It's not only a statement to the province, it's a statement to the general public and indeed to all who would listen and look at it in terms of making their own decisions.

So the government's decision to proceed with the budget on the date which has been set out by the Minister of Finance, which I can tell him—I don't think I'm giving any terrible secrets away—has been a discussion that we've had for a period of time in terms of knowing it was coming in May and of wanting to determine that date. No great surprise here, and I don't want to take away from the Minister of Finance's announcement today or from his quest for a brief moment in the sun, or any other newspaper for that matter, but I would say that we are going to proceed on the basis of the budget plan as set out by the government.

Having said that, I guess there is a contrast between not only the direction of the government but also frankly

the way in which we do business. I value the advice, the abilities, the professionalism, the dedication and the service of the nearly one million people who work for the taxpayers of this province, and I don't intend for one second to suggest that we would want to embark on a course that would not involve a dialogue with them on how we can achieve the objectives set out in the budget.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: I think that dialogue is essential, I think that negotiation is crucial, and we very much want that negotiation to succeed.

Mr Harris: I appreciate what the Premier is saying. I appreciate he is saying exactly what I have been saying for the last three years, what I said for two years, what I said in January, exactly what I said yesterday, Tuesday, Monday, since it started: that you must be firm.

Last night the Premier speaking to the CAW was very firm. He said: "Let's get serious here, brothers and sisters. We're firm: \$2 billion is coming out." I said if they would understand that, you could have meaningful negotiations. I agree. I agree that you want to negotiate with the 950,000 hardworking men and women, very talented public servants we have in the province. The only thing they're lacking is leadership. The only thing they're lacking is the vision from the top and the leadership and the direction from the top to unleash their skills.

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So let me ask you this, Premier. You've set the deadline. I think you're firm. You just said to me: "The budget won't be violated. It will be out of the budget." Now, that means one of two things if the talks are not successful. That means legislation to cut out the \$2 billion or you'll move unilaterally. Can you tell us what you plan to do and how you plan to do it?

Hon Mr Rae: First of all, I would say there's an old story of the little kid who goes to the hockey game and sings the national anthem and thinks he's unilaterally caused the hockey game to start. Somehow, when I hear the honourable member taking credit for all that's happened in the last while, I'm somewhat reminded of that story. His colleague the member for Parry Sound was there as well, and I'm sure he would not suffer from that kind of delusion. I would just say to the honourable member that if he has some deep need to take credit for whatever it is that's going on, I must confess I don't share that need.

Nor do I share the view that the most productive way to start negotiations is to say to people, "Look, if you don't do this, I'm going to do that." I don't think that's a very effective way to negotiate. I think the most effective way to negotiate is for us to proceed along the lines that we are, and that is to say we're being completely candid with what needs to be done.

I think in fact, if I may say so, judging from the number of comments I've had from people in a range of communities and a range of interests in the province, I've been struck by the number of people who've said to me, "Premier, your government has got the guts and the courage and the direction to do things which no other government in the history of this province has had in the last 25 to 30 years in terms of dealing with the financial problems."

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: So I would say to the honourable member that if he wants to give speeches on whatever he wants, that's fine, but his suggestion that at this point the government should be saying to people, "You do this or else," I don't think that's wise.

I think it's set out very clearly in terms of the reality that we face—

The Speaker: Would the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: —the financial targets are very clear and I think that everyone can see very clearly the need for us to move together, and the fact that the government has set out on a course, it intends to pursue that course and wants very much to talk to its employees about how we can—

The Speaker: Please take your seat. Final supplementary.

Mr Harris: I appreciate the Premier doesn't want to spend any time patting himself on the back. I think that's what I heard.

Interjection.

Mr Harris: Well, that's what you said and then proceeded to do that.

Clearly, I think any objective observer would agree negotiations have been meaningless up until today. The union said: "He doesn't have enough courage to legislate. There is no deadline. We can talk tax hikes." That's what it's all been about. There hasn't been any negotiation. I say, as of today, because you've got a firm resolve, you say you're tough, that negotiations can continue—can start, actually.

Premier, every day that's gone by, because we're into the fiscal year, \$5.5 million is being paid out in excess of the Treasurer's targets—every day that goes by. This will mean that by June 4 more than \$300 million in potential savings—because it was not agreed to at the start of the fiscal year—\$300 million has gone by, has been paid out in excess of the guidelines for 1993-94.

Premier, the longer the negotiations were delayed, the more money that was paid out, the more cost to taxpayers, the deeper the cuts would have to be afterward. Now that there's a firm deadline, now that there is apparently resolve that the \$2 billion will come

out—that's the only thing I told you to do, send that signal—now, as long as Mr Ryan believes you, the faster the unions can settle, the more it's in their interests. The cuts don't have to be deeper.

Would you agree with me on that, Premier, that we can now proceed with meaningful negotiations—

The Speaker: Would the member place his question, please.

Mr Harris: —and if you will simply tell them that if they break down on the 4th, you're going to move unilaterally, they'll be even faster and want to get them—

The Speaker: Would the member please place his question.

Mr Harris: —over with even faster. Will you tell us that?

Hon Mr Rae: I'm delighted that the honourable member has apparently changed his position, because last week he was arguing for bang, bang, bang. Now he's saying, "Let's have the negotiations," and he accepts the fact that the 30-day period is reasonable. If he has now changed his position, another flip-flop from the Tories with respect to their position, I can live with that as long as the honourable member can live with that.

But I would say to him very directly, I think everyone in the province understands the nature of the financial situation that we face and the fact that obviously it would be in everyone's interests for there to be a full and complete set of negotiations and discussions based on the financial realities that we all share. That's the basis upon which we're entering into these discussions.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Harris: Quite right, Premier. The first bang was: Be firm, be tough; the \$2 billion will come out. The second one: Set a deadline. The third is: Tell them what you'll do if you fail.

The Speaker: Is this the second question?

Mr Harris: Give us the three; you could have meaningful negotiations.

The Speaker: Does the leader have a second question?

POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY CROWN EMPLOYEES

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I appreciate your reminding me that a second question is afforded me under the rules of the House, and I do, and it's to the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

As I'm sure you are—

[Interruption]

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. Stop the clock, please. Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. For the information of members, the clock had been stopped. We now resume and I recognize the leader of the third party with his second question.

Mr Harris: I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. When you guys were organizing, those demonstrations were a lot better, but anyway.

To the Minister of Agriculture: I'm sure you are aware, Mr Minister, that Dr Doug Galt, an employee of your ministry, was forced by your government to resign on Tuesday as warden of Northumberland county. When Dr Galt ran for municipal office, he sought direction from both you and your deputy so as to avoid any conflict of interest, and he was given the okay to run. Yet now, nearly 18 months later, he has been ordered to resign as warden for forwarding a copy of a resolution which was passed by his council to your attention.

Minister, did you direct your deputy to write this letter which forced Dr Galt to resign?

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): No, I did not direct the deputy to write such a letter.

Mr Harris: I want the minister to listen to what Dr Galt sent to the minister. It was to the federal minister, cc to him:

"At the December 9, 1992, Northumberland county council meeting, Mr Ben Currelly, chairman of Northumberland council rural development committee, presented the following motion and resolution:

"That we support Mr Currelly's presentation regarding the difficulties cash croppers of corn and soybeans are facing in Northumberland."

I don't want to read it all, but I think the minister probably has it. You get the sense that it's this kind of routine resolution that is passed by municipal councils and by regions and counties, probably 10, 15, 20, 25 of them at every meeting.

Is it not more accurate to say that Dr Galt, in forwarding this resolution under his signature—that if you are now interpreting that as putting him into a conflict with a job within your ministry, clearly it is your interpretation that has changed, that clearly Dr Galt, if your interpretation has changed, made, at the most serious possible interpretation, an honest mistake—that he shouldn't put his signature to those routine resolutions?

The Cobourg Daily Star in fact reported that you said on Tuesday Mr Galt's actions would be permitted under your own government's proposed political activity rights legislation, legislation which you haven't bothered to deal with. Would you not agree with me that Dr Galt was forced to resign unfairly? Will you correct this matter and allow him to continue in his responsibilities as warden?

Hon Mr Buchanan: I'm sure that the leader of the

third party knows that the administration of the Public Service Act relating to the employees at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food is dealt with by the deputy minister.

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I'm sure the member also knows that there were conversations between the employee he's mentioned and the deputy on a couple of occasions, trying to explain the terms of conflict of interest, what it meant, what was permissible and what wasn't. I'm informed that such conversations took place and it was outlined very clearly what they were.

The deputy made a determination that there had been a problem with the breach of conflict here and took actions as she saw fit to enforce the current provisions of the act. She had to deal with the act as it currently exists, not as any proposal that's coming in, and she went about and did her duty properly.

Mr Harris: All of the mayors and reeves who deal in that county that Dr Galt is warden of believe the timing of this letter is very suspicious. Dr Galt is leading criticism of your government for social contract talks. Dr Galt and this county are very critical of this government, and they are all calling our offices, expressing suspicion that it couldn't have been the fact that Dr Galt signed this routine letter forwarding a resolution; that you gave him permission to run, that if he has violated anything it surely is only somebody's different interpretation and that forcing him to resign is totally inappropriate and they're all saying that they suspect you've done it to shut him up. The first time somebody criticizes the government, you lie and slander him. You go out, you do whatever you can. Now you are forcing him to resign.

The Speaker: Order. I ask the leader to take his seat. The leader will know that it is not helpful to stray over the line and to accuse a minister of lying. I'd ask the member to withdraw the remark.

Mr Harris: Can I withdraw the comments with respect to the Minister of Northern Development and stick to the Minister of Agriculture?

The Speaker: To the honourable leader, what would be very helpful is if simply the unparliamentary language—

Mr Harris: I withdrew the lying and slandering. They dealt with the Minister of Northern Development and I withdrew them. I'll withdraw them again, if you would like, Mr Speaker.

Could I stick now to the Minister of Agriculture, who forced Dr Galt to resign because he criticized your government? Will you apologize and will you make sure that he is given the opportunity to be reinstated and be warden of Northumberland county?

Hon Mr Buchanan: My friends over on this side of the House say that the member in question is running for

the federal Tories. I am not aware of that. This is not a political issue. In my mind, it was a matter of the deputy minister dealing with conflict of interest rules that are in the Public Service Act. That's all there is.

I was not aware that this employee was talking about the social contract. I suspect the member for Northumberland, who would be the more proper one to ask such a question here in the House, would be better informed on that, but I certainly am not aware of what employees at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food are saying all across this province. So the member is bringing information to me. It has nothing to do with any of that. This was not an action that was taken by myself. This has nothing to do with politics. It's simply following the Public Service Act.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question is to the Minister of Finance, just to follow up on some of the questions we've had around the budget. The minister will recall that I asked a question a week ago on some of the numbers that he promised to get back to me on. Our feeling, as we try to look at the budget, is that you have substantially overstated the interest payments, that there's probably \$550 million of fiscal stabilization money and that there's probably \$1 billion of asset sales.

The reason I raise all of these is because the Premier talks often about open and accessible government. We are trying to be helpful in the budget process. I wonder if you've had a chance to look at those things that you promised and if you can now inform the House where those three things stand.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Yes, indeed. As a matter of fact, I have some material I was going to walk across and give to the member for Scarborough-Agincourt in a minute.

The other thing that we did had to do with the deferrals that you'd asked about in the House. I have more specific information on that.

But beyond that, we sat down over in Finance and tried to get where the member was coming from on his numbers. I think we've got some idea of how he arrived at some of his conclusions, but we're not sure how we got to some of his numbers.

I believe he was taking issue with some of the numbers that we had issued in our 5 April statement on Ontario finances, and he has added in a lot more numbers on the asset sales than we had in our statement. He's also, I think, very substantially underestimating the cost of interest on the public debt, and that is one on which I would take particular issue with the member.

We had a debt—I see the Speaker is looking at me. I'd be happy to respond specifically to the interest on the public debt with your supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Supplementary.

Mr Phillips: Well, Mr Speaker, I've been asking the Minister of Finance and his officials to give me the rationale for the numbers. They make publicly no sense and I can't get the numbers privately, so that's why I've been pursuing it.

The supplementary follows up on the comment I made to the Treasurer around tax revenues. Our estimates, looking at your numbers, are that the tax revenue this year, 1993-94, will go up \$1.7 billion with no tax changes—\$1.7 billion increased tax revenue. Now it happens that you are repaying the federal government \$800 million and it happens that you have changed the tax credit.

Hon Mr Laughren: It doesn't just happen.

Mr Phillips: Yes, it just happens. But the point is this, that you normally, Mr Minister, estimate job impact and what it's going to do to the economy. The fact is that the government is taking \$1.7 billion in increased taxes out of the Ontario economy. That's 5% more taxes coming out of the Ontario economy.

My question is this. What impact is that going to have on the economy? I gather you're talking about adding taxes on top of that. How much more taxes can the economy stand without pushing us back into a recession or at least stalling the economy?

Hon Mr Laughren: Actually, I think the Liberal opposition is more qualified to answer that than I am, given its history.

But let me deal with the member directly. As a critic he spent more time in the Ministry of Finance, I think, than I have in some weeks, and that's fair. We are always pleased to provide a briefing to the member for Scarborough-Agincourt. We are getting perplexed, however, because every time he leaves he shakes his head and didn't appreciate the information that's been given to him, because we are trying very hard to take the member seriously in his criticism. I'll give you an example.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): He appreciates it. Your numbers don't make sense.

Hon Mr Laughren: If the member for Oriole would just calm down, I'll try and respond to the member for Scarborough-Agincourt.

On the interest on the public debt specifically, let me deal with that directly. We have now a total debt in the province of a little over \$68 billion. The average cost of servicing that debt is a little over 10%. That comes out to roughly \$7 billion, plus there's going to be borrowing in this fiscal year, which will also have some cost to it, which takes it up to our number of about \$7.6 billion for servicing the public debt.

The member for Scarborough-Agincourt says that interest on the public debt this year is only going to cost us \$6.4 billion. I really don't know how you can come up with that number and say that we're overestimating

the cost of servicing the debt, because if you look at the average cost of the debt that's there now, that must be paid, and it comes to about \$7 billion. So you can't possibly have a number of \$6.4 billion, which doesn't take into consideration any new borrowing, none at all.

The Speaker: Will the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Laughren: Thank you, Mr Speaker.
1500

JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I have a question for the Premier. Yesterday, Premier, a senior official with the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force released some shocking statistics. The first-quarter figures on the number of bank robberies in Metro indicate that this has all the makings of a record year. In the first three months alone, there were 110 bank robberies in Metro Toronto, up from a total of 80 for the same period a year ago.

As if that news isn't bad enough, the figures show that in almost every case where an arrest has been made, the person charged is a repeat offender of one kind or another. In 49 cases, 42 of the people charged were either out on bail, on parole or on probation at the time of the robbery. Clearly, Premier, the system is not working. The police say the kinds of jail terms these people are getting are not serving as a deterrent.

My question is this: Are you prepared today to speak out on behalf of Metropolitan Toronto, on behalf of the people of Ontario, send a clear signal to all politicians, federal and provincial, to all judges, to all attorneys general, that this is unacceptable, that we must have sufficient deterrents that criminals don't feel it's easier just to go out and commit more crimes? Are you prepared to do that?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I think the Solicitor General would be eager to answer this question.

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services): I'm pleased to respond to the question the member has asked. Let me say first of all that the member will know that the corrections system here in Ontario deals with all individuals who are sentenced to sentences of two years less a day; and that currently, we've seen a lot of activity at the federal level where, traditionally, many of the more dangerous offenders are being dealt with in terms of the kinds of sentences, the kinds of issues that come from that.

In fact, I would signal to the honourable member that recently, I met with the federal Solicitor General and we reviewed a number of the actions that he is contemplating. We talked about the matters that we'll be talking about at an upcoming federal-provincial justice ministers' conference that will be happening in a few weeks.

Let me say to the member very, very clearly that we

are working closely with the police community to ensure that the system is working as best we can expect, given the issues that we have and the fact that we are limited to some degree by recognizing that recidivism rates around the world are affected by many treatments. We do what we can to implement those treatments and deal with the issues as best we can, and I'll be pleased to answer further details in a supplementary question.

Mr Harris: Quite frankly, most of that is nonsense; that is absolute nonsense. The Premier has a responsibility to speak out and send a clear direction to all those involved in the judicial system. The Attorney General has an obligation to speak out to the crown attorneys, who should be seeking stiffer sentences. That is clearly the responsibility of the provincial government. If they get stiffer sentences, they will then go to federal institutions, not provincial ones.

We understand that. Every time I raise this, you come back and say, "You don't want us to interfere in the justice system." I'm not asking you to interfere, as the Attorney General did in the Bernardo case. I'm not asking you to interfere, as the Attorney General did in briefing the Premier on the Piper affair. This is not an individual intervention. This is a statement on behalf of the police, on behalf of those involved with law enforcement, on behalf of Ontarians, that you concur with what they're telling us: that there is not enough deterrent to deter criminals from taking the route of going back out and committing these armed robberies, bank robberies and offences once again.

Will you, since the Premier won't, since the Attorney General won't, will you, on behalf of the government, speak up for the police, speak up for Ontarians and say: "Enough is enough. We've got to toughen up here"?

Hon Mr Christopherson: Let me say first of all that I reject categorically the suggestion that what I responded with earlier was nonsense. I would direct the honourable member to look very carefully at a recent all-party report that his party, his federal colleagues, who are the parliamentary majority in Ottawa, were in agreement with, when they talked about: What are the root causes of crime, and what ought we be doing in our criminal justice system to respond to these needs?

I would say to the honourable member with a great deal of sincerity that myself, the Attorney General, our federal counterparts, do speak up very clearly. We're working in concert trying to ensure that this system that people want and deserve is in place.

But rather than go down this track, I would strongly suggest that he take the time to read that report and see what our federal colleagues are saying when they talk about the causes of crime, when they talk about the causes of recidivism and when they talk about what the deterrents are that will really work, rather than the kind of rhetoric that the member is engaging in today.

ST CLAIR PARKWAY COMMISSION

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): My question is to the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. Minister, my question is regarding the St Clair Parkway Commission. Minister, you will know that the commission was created in 1966 to operate a system of parks along the St Clair River and Lake St Clair and that it currently operates a total of 22 facilities including Sarnia Bay marina and facilities in Moore Town, Mitchell's Bay and the historical site Uncle Tom's Cabin, near Dresden.

Minister, you will also know that the expenditure control plan in your ministry resulted in a \$473,000 cutback in provincial funding to the St Clair Parkway Commission.

I think we can all agree that the province is in a serious financial situation and we can agree that we must tighten our belts, but your ministry must have some obligation to work with its transfer partners during these tough times. It's not good enough to simply advise the commission that its funding has been cut. I believe we have an obligation to assist our transfer partners through what will be a very difficult transition period.

My question is this: What plans does your ministry have to help the St Clair Parkway Commission get through the difficulty it's facing? Minister, the St Clair parkway is one of the jewels of southwestern Ontario. What will you and your ministry do to help preserve the parkway?

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I'm pleased to have this opportunity in the House to express my appreciation for the economic and the recreational benefits that the St Clair Parkway Commission provides to its local communities.

In phoning to speak to the chairperson of the commission, Yoshio Shimizu, and relaying the information about the cuts to him, I did offer to him the assistance of my staff in helping the commission to come up with the ideas as to how it could help meet the gap that is created by the loss of provincial funds.

As a result of conversations that the member for Sarnia and also the member for Lambton have had with me and in fact some different concerns that have been raised with me by the member for Chatham-Kent, I've decided to arrange for my parliamentary assistant, Dan Waters, to work with the ministry staff person responsible, to go down to meet with the general manager and the chair of the commission as well as with the local MPPs in the area and the municipalities to try to work through the transitional plan which would help that commission to be able to attain financial independence.

Mr Huget: I appreciate your comments, Minister, but by way of supplementary, you will know that the funding cut is to the commission's operating budget and not the capital budget. In other words, they can buy lawnmowers, but can't hire anyone to operate them.

Minister, will you undertake today to approach treasury board and request its approval to allow the St Clair Parkway Commission some flexibility between the 1993-94 capital and operating budgets so that the commission can use the remaining provincial funds to the best advantage of the parkway in 1993-94?

Hon Ms Swarbrick: As the member has referred to, our ministry has allocated capital funds in the amount of \$316,000 to the St Clair Parkway Commission this year in addition to \$1.2 million this year and then the next three-year period after this, that latter part being to help develop, restore and expand Uncle's Tom Cabin, as he referred to earlier. It's our position that that capital money is designed to try to help the commission in its number-one-stated request as to its capital needs this year and also to be able to help it move towards the kind of financial independence I spoke of earlier.

In terms of any application to treasury board to change that capital into operating funds, to be honest, I can't in all good faith support that, because the capital funds we're talking about are a one-year-only amount of money. Operating funds, of course, create that continuing dependency on a year-to-year basis.

I'm thrilled that the commission has been expressing very positively its interest in working with the ministry and my parliamentary assistant to try and help work through this transitional time, and we pledge our support in helping it through that.

1510

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): My question is to the Attorney General. On April 29, 1993, you announced the establishment of an African Canadian specialty legal services clinic. Can the minister tell me what the precise mandate of this clinic is? What exactly is it going to do? When is it going to start? Is it going to be a permanent fixture with assured funding to the tune of \$400,000 annually? Is the clinic going to be a central resource for other clinics in the area of community advocacy and legal issues of race? Will the Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian legal clinic, the Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto and the Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped, ARCH, report to them? Or is it just another patronizing and expensive half-measure program?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): It is intended to be exactly the kind of advocacy clinic that those other clinics are that the member mentioned. In fact, the specialty clinics all have been designed to meet the specific needs of communities as those communities identify them and are designed to undertake test cases in areas of human rights. They are certainly meant to act as resource centres for their community in terms of the legal rights of those communities, in terms of community advocacy, in terms of all legal issues which might relate to the particular community involved.

Given the deep concern that's been expressed by the African Canadian community about many, many parts of our legal system, we felt this was an important area of support for that community. It is certainly not window dressing. The community itself will be involved as the clinic is developed, as has been the case with the other specialty clinics, because there needs to be a sense of ownership within the community in order for those specialty clinics to be really effective community resources.

Mr Curling: I asked the Attorney General if the other advocacy groups would be answering to this group because that's what your press release stated. There is a black lawyers' organization, and I know it was never consulted. The Ontario legal aid plan apparently was not fully consulted either. I know that the four-level African Canadian community working group recommended that the government ask African Canadian organizations working in the area of criminal justice to conduct a needs assessment.

Can the minister tell me specifically which groups and individuals from the many linguistically and culturally diverse black communities were consulted? Is this your answer, Madam Minister, to combat systemic racism?

Hon Mrs Boyd: No, it certainly isn't the whole answer, but it is certainly one of the ways in which we hope to meet the needs. What we announced was our willingness to fund this. We have had many, many requests during the work that's been done on the look at the criminal justice system for a similar kind of clinic. Over the years, since the specialty clinics began to be formed, there have been requests from many communities that we look at similar kinds of things.

The point now—now that we've agreed that we're prepared to fund this clinic, that we think it's important—is to do exactly the kind of consultation that you are suggesting needs to be done. Unless we are willing to fund, there's not much point in raising the hopes of communities. So what we're saying is that we are willing to fund, and now it is time for us to create together the kind of clinic that is going to meet the needs addressed by the community.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question, the member for Dufferin-Peel.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Dufferin-Peel has the floor.

LANDFILL

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a question for the Minister of Environment and Energy. The minister announced recently that he has taken over or will be overseeing the Interim Waste Authority.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I haven't taken it over. I always had responsibility for it.

Mr Tilson: Well, that's what you said a couple of weeks ago. Of course, I'm waiting for a response as to how much you think it's going to cost to fund the dump sites in the three regions for the rest of the term. I'm waiting anxiously for that information.

My question has to do with Bill 143. Bill 143 says that when you create a dump in the three regions, that dump must last 20 years, and that's based on a certain set of criteria. As you know, the IWA discovered about a year ago that many of those dumps—I'm thinking of two specifically—will not last 20 years, that in one case it will last 16½ years and in another case it will last only 18 years. What the Interim Waste Authority did, of course, was to change the criteria, and that had to do with increasing the maximum allowable for height restrictions.

My question to the Minister of Environment and Energy is, how can you allow the IWA, the Interim Waste Authority, to break the law as set forth in Bill 143 and then to arbitrarily change the criteria, simply to suit its own purposes?

Hon Mr Wildman: The member surely doesn't expect me to accept the premises of his question. The fact is that the government has full confidence in the IWA, in the work it is doing, and that it will comply with the law and that the sites it finally identifies will be adequate to meet the requirements of Bill 143 and will also be subject to full environmental assessments to determine whether they are appropriate sites. I'm confident that the sites they put before the Environmental Assessment Board will indeed comply with the law and ensure that the environment is protected.

Mr Tilson: The fact of the matter is that you pass Bill 143 that sets out how long a landfill site is to last, and then partway through the process your puppet, the IWA, changes the rules. Well, you created it; your government created the IWA, and the fact of the matter is people don't know what's going on over there. They're unaccountable to you; they're unaccountable to anyone. They're just mid-term changing the rules with respect to legislation that you passed, namely, Bill 143.

My supplementary question is, if this process is to be non-partisan and unbiased, how can the Interim Waste Authority change the criteria, which is what it's done with these sites, without consultation with you or with anyone else, simply to suit its own purposes? How can the residents affected by these decisions believe you when you reiterate the same tired statements over and over again about a fair process? Finally, why don't you just admit that the process of finding three simple superdumps outside the greater Toronto area is patently unfair and is the worst form of bias and governmental interference?

Hon Mr Wildman: I know, according to the rules of the House, Mr Speaker, that a member is never to be provocative in presenting a question, so I would not

suggest that the member was attempting to be provocative.

I would say that we have full confidence, as I indicated, in the IWA process. It is indeed a non-partisan process. Of course, they are subject to the Legislature. They must report to the Legislature through me as Minister of Environment. I'm happy to take into account any of the concerns the member has to present, and I'm sure that he knows the whole process has been one of the most comprehensive consultations that has ever taken place by any agency set up by any government in this province. It is the widest consultation around the setting up of a landfill site or landfill sites that has ever been contemplated by any government in this province.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Mr Norm Jamison (Norfolk): My question is for the Minister of Education and Training. Mr Minister, recently there was an incident with one of my local school boards which resulted in the board having to comply with regulation 309 of the Education Act. As you know, Mr Minister, that is the regulation regarding the suspension or dismissal of supervisory officers. At the time, an individual under the jurisdiction of the board was being disciplined, and I heard numerous complaints from the community regarding the obstructionist nature of the regulation in terms of allowing the school board, once it had made a personnel decision, to carry it out swiftly and firmly.

I spoke to the former Minister of Education about the issue, and at the time I was aware that a change to the regulation was in the works. Mr Minister, I now understand, and this is of importance to many of my constituents, that the regulation has received approval. Could you tell me and the House what these changes mean in terms of removing obstacles for school boards across the province to act in an appropriate manner?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I appreciate the question from the member. Supervisory officers, as you know, Mr Speaker, perform important functions within our school system as senior educators and administrators and, because of that, because of their special role, that's reflected in the Education Act, which outlines their duties and says they cannot be suspended or dismissed unless they are guilty of neglect or misconduct. In other words, there must be valid reasons for suspending or dismissing them.

However, under regulation 309, it provided for a very long and complex process for the suspension or dismissal of supervisory officers. The regulation also provided that a supervisory officer who was dismissed was entitled to a minimum of six months' salary. The government did not believe that was appropriate and the amendments that we announced provide that a supervisory officer may not be suspended or dismissed without being first told that the board is considering this action and being given an opportunity to respond to the board

orally or in writing.

This ensures a standard of fairness. If the board dismisses a supervisory officer without proper cause, he may take legal action. The system has been made more streamlined and, I think, more fair to the taxpayers of the province.

1520

Mr Jamison: There seems to be, at this point in time, some disagreement as to whether these regulations and changes will be retroactive to incidents that have already occurred. Indeed, I have heard a couple of individuals in the legal profession suggest that personnel matters from the past would probably be affected by these changes. It is my understanding that the regulation changes will not be retroactive and will take effect from the date of May 1 when the changes are published in the Ontario Gazette. Could you clarify this particular situation regarding the regulation?

Hon Mr Cooke: I'd like to confirm what the member has said, that the regulation is going to be published in the Ontario Gazette May 1, and therefore that's when it will take effect and it will not be retroactive.

PETITIONS

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition signed by 185 residents of eastern Ontario and the petition is to members of the provincial Parliament:

"The amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act proposed wide-open Sunday shopping and the elimination of Sunday as a legal holiday.

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition in the strongest of terms to Bill 38 which will eliminate Sunday from the definition of 'legal holiday' in the Retail Business Holidays Act.

"I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship of many families.

"The amendment included in Bill 38, dated June 3, 1992, to delete all Sundays except Easter, 51 per year, from the definition of legal holiday and reclassify them as working days should be defeated."

GAMBLING

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the NDP government is considering legalizing casinos and video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario; and

"Whereas there is great public concern about the negative impact that will result from the above-mentioned implementations;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assem-

bly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government stop looking to casinos and video lottery terminals as a 'quick-fix' solution to its fiscal problems and concentrate instead on eliminating of wasteful government spending."

I have affixed my signature as well.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I'm glad to add to the thousands of signatures I've presented in this House against casino gambling.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has had a historical concern for the poor in society who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos, despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos, and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly, along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I'm very glad today to sign my signature along with the people from Dunsford, Bobcaygeon, Lindsay and Toronto.

MOTORCYCLES

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly from motorcycle enthusiasts from across the province. It states:

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario agreed to the text and spirit of resolution 29 which states, 'That in the opinion of this House, given that motorcycles use less of everything, the government of Ontario should promote the use of motorcycles,'

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to proclaim the month of May 1993 as Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month in the province of Ontario."

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the British North America Act of 1867 recognizes the right of Catholic students to a Catholic education, and in keeping with this, the province of Ontario supports two educational systems from kindergarten to grade 12/OAC; and

"Whereas the Metropolitan Separate School Board educates more than 104,000 students across Metropolitan Toronto; and

"Whereas these students represent 30% of the total number of students in this area, yet have access to just 20% of the total residential assessment and 9.5% of the pooled corporate assessment; and

"Whereas the Metropolitan Separate School Board is able to spend \$1,678 less on each of its elementary school students and \$2,502 less on each of its secondary school students than our public school counterpart;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to act now and restructure the way in which municipal and provincial tax dollars are apportioned, so that Ontario's two principal education systems are funded not only fully but with equity and equality."

This petition is signed by over 100 constituents and by me.

LANDFILL

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I wonder if I could have the page hold this up for me. When I visited the Macville Public School in Caledon earlier this week, the students presented me with this petition in the hopes that I would present it to the Legislative—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. It really would be more appropriate if the member would simply state the purpose of the petition and the number of signatures, if he wishes, and then present it.

Mr Tilson: Mr Speaker, I am trying to do that. What they asked me to do was to present this petition to the Legislature with respect to the problem they have in the town of Caledon.

In this petition the students state, and I quote, "The students of Macville Public School know that a landfill site will be harmful to Bolton."

This petition has been signed by approximately 200 students of Macville school and I too have signed my signature.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): This is the same issue of casino gambling with a little twist, because people really realize what the government's trying to do here.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the

expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families and others are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth of crime;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm very glad to affix my signature to this.

1530

MOTORCYCLES

Mr Peter North (Elgin): I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario agreed to the text and spirit of resolution 29 which states, 'That In the opinion of this House, given that motorcycles use less of everything, the government of Ontario should promote the use of motorcycles,'

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to proclaim the month of May 1993 as Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month in the province of Ontario."

People like Gord Campbell from St Thomas, Anne Dwyre from Aylmer, Ron Sale and Dot Sale from Belmont, Ontario, and Al Blanchard from St Thomas, a number of people from my particular area, and I'm pleased to affix my name to it.

COURT RULING

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I have a petition from well over 100 people from Guelph, Grasslands and Toronto which is addressed as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, believe that there has been a tremendous miscarriage of justice in the murder trial of Mr Guy Ellul, 1990. The sexist nature of this case's progress through the Canadian legal system was further compounded by Attorney General Howard Hampton's decision, the day before the legal deadline, to abandon acquittal appeal. His decision freed a murderer and demonstrated the justice system's disinterest in protecting the constitutional rights and freedoms of Canadian women. Our signatures demand the retrial of Guy Ellul and urge an increased consciousness of women's rights

in the Canadian legal system."

I have affixed my name to this petition.

MOTORCYCLES

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario agreed to the text and spirit of resolution 29, which Mike Cooper presented, which states, 'That in the opinion of this House, given that motorcycles use less of everything, the government of Ontario should promote the use of motorcycles,'

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to proclaim the month of May as Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month in the province of Ontario."

I affix my name to this petition also.

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr Tony Ruprecht (Parkdale): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the British North America Act of 1867 recognizes the rights of Catholic students to a Catholic education and, in keeping with this, the province of Ontario supports two educational systems from kindergarten to grade 12; and

"Whereas the Metropolitan Toronto Separate School Board educates more than 104,000 students across Metro Toronto; and

"Whereas these students represent 30% of the total number of students in this area, yet have access to just 20% of the total residential assessment and 9.5% of the pooled corporate assessment; and

"Whereas the Metropolitan Toronto Separate School Board is able to spend \$1,678 less on each of its elementary school students and \$2,502 less on each of its secondary school students than their public school counterparts,

"We, the undersigned, petition the assembly of Ontario to act now and restructure the way in which municipal and provincial tax dollars are apportioned so that Ontario's two principal education systems are funded not only fully, but with equity and equality."

I am more than proud to affix my signature this petition.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I have a petition signed by several hundred people from the Fletcher United Church in my riding, and it says:

"I, the undersigned, hereby register my opposition to wide-open Sunday business. I believe in the need of keeping Sunday as a holiday for family time, quality of life and religious freedom. The elimination of such a day will be detrimental to the fabric of society in Ontario and cause increased hardship on retailers, retail employees and their families. The proposed amendment

of the Retail Business Holidays Act, Bill 38, to delete all Sundays except Easter from the definition of 'legal holiday' and reclassify them as working days...."

It is signed by several people in my riding and Mr Hope's riding, from Merlin, Chatham, Tilbury, Blenheim, a wide range of people in our ridings.

GAMBLING

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

That is signed by about 100 constituents.

TOBACCO TAXES

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): I too have a petition, from the Smokers' Freedom Society. The petition was gathered at the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association trade show, Hostex '93, over a three-day appearance from April 25 to 27. The petition reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the present high levels of taxes on tobacco products are excessive and contrary to the interests of Ontario's two million smokers; and

"Whereas high tobacco taxes are contributing to retail theft and to our province's cross-border shopping crisis; and

"Whereas these punitive taxes and resulting lost sales are contributing to inflation as well as costing jobs in Ontario; and

"Whereas high cigarette taxes are regressive and unfair to low- and modest-income citizens;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Ontario's tobacco taxes should not be increased

in 1993 and, further, that these taxes should be repealed and a new lower and fairer tax be introduced."

I agree with this and I've signed it. We have 490 signatures on this petition.

FINANCEMENT DES CONSEILS D'ÉDUCATION

M. Rosario Marchese (Fort York) : J'ai ici une pétition qui a été signée par 30 personnes au sujet du financement de l'éducation et qui se lit comme suit :

«Nous, soussignés, présentons une pétition à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario concernant la répartition des recettes fiscales municipales et provinciales pour que les deux principaux systèmes d'éducation de l'Ontario soient financés de façon intégrale, égale et équitable.»

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): I have another petition, sent to me by constituents of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School. It reads as follows:

"As parents with children in the Metropolitan Separate School Board and as Catholic ratepayers, we are greatly disturbed by the inequity inherent in the current system of education funding.

"Whereas the rights of Catholic schools were guaranteed under the British North America Act of 1867, the Metropolitan Separate School Board was never given equal funding.

"Today this board educates 30% of the students in Metro yet has access to just 20.3% of residential and 9.5% of pooled corporate assessments.

"Whereas this year the public school board was able to spend \$1,678 more per elementary pupil than the Metropolitan Separate School Board was able to spend on our children;

"At the same time, our property taxes were as high or higher than that of public school supporters. This is not equitable and it does a great injustice to our Catholic students and ratepayers.

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to support equity for all students, regardless of which school they choose to attend, and to vote in favour of extending not just full but equal and equitable funding to Catholic schools."

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr Huget from the standing committee on resources development presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

Shall Bill 96 be ordered for third reading? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered to committee of the whole.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr Hansen from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly presented the committee's report on standing order 108(b) and moved its adoption.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Mr Hansen presents the committee's report and moves its adoption. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): Yes, Mr Speaker. Pursuant to standing order 108(b), your committee met yesterday to review the ministries and offices assigned to the standing committees for the purpose of standing order 108, resulting in this report.

The Speaker: Did you move adjournment of the debate?

Mr Hansen: I move adjournment of the debate, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

1540

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS OMBUDSMAN REPEAL ACT, 1993 LOI DE 1993 ABROGEANT LA LOI SUR L'OMBUDSMAN

On motion by Mr Mahoney, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 10, An Act to repeal the Ombudsman Act / Loi abrogeant la Loi sur l'ombudsman.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Just by way of explanation, the government is looking for ways to save money, and it has indeed asked municipalities and school boards and other people that it refers to as partners to accept cuts. I'm suggesting in this bill that the government look in the mirror and that it look at \$10 million a year in cuts. This in fact would close the Ombudsman office and would see that the 130 members who sit in this place do their jobs as ombudsmen as well.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993 LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS RELATIVES AUX MUNICIPALITÉS

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management / Loi modifiant certaines lois relatives aux municipalités en ce qui concerne la gestion des déchets.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I welcome this opportunity to comment on Bill 7, An Act to amend

certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management, which was introduced in this Legislature by the Minister of Municipal Affairs on April 21, 1993.

This bill is aimed at amending various municipal statutes to expand the waste management powers available to municipalities.

The powers of local municipalities are set out in new sections 208.1 to 208.11 in the Municipal Act, and they include the power to establish, maintain and operate a waste management system, including services and facilities, for the reduction, recycling and reuse of waste.

Also it's to establish fees for the use of any part of a waste management system. It requires persons generating waste to separate any class of waste at the point of collection. It prohibits or regulates the dumping, treatment and disposal of waste at a waste management facility.

It also wants to appoint inspectors and allows them to enter on land to obtain information necessary to meet the requirements of or to obtain an approval under any act relating to a waste disposal site or a waste management facility. The powers of the inspectors are set out in sections 208.8 to 208.11 of the act, section 1.

The powers of a county in respect of waste management, as set out in section 209 of the Municipal Act, are amended to reflect the changes to the powers of the local municipality, which the county, under certain circumstances, may assume. That's in section 2.

The Regional Municipalities Act is amended to allow regional municipalities to assume, under certain circumstances, any or all of the waste management powers that area municipalities have under the Municipal Act. Details as to the transfer of agreements, assets and liabilities from the area municipality to the regional corporation are set out in the new sections 151 to 159.

The regional corporations shall be deemed to have passed a bylaw on the 1st day of January 1997 to assume the waste reduction powers of their area municipalities if they have not already done so by that date.

In the County of Oxford Act, the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Act and the District Municipality of Muskoka Act and each of the regional acts, amendments are made to incorporate the changes to the Municipal Act and the Regional Municipalities Act, which is sections 6 to 19.

The Municipal Affairs Act is amended to include waste management sites in the definition of "public utility," which is section 20.

While I have serious difficulties with the reservations about Bill 7, I do not support the principle of waste reduction in the province of Ontario, because quite frankly I believe the NDP government's controversial search for landfill sites to dump Metropolitan Toronto garbage is ludicrous. It is my personal opinion that we do not require any new landfill sites. In fact, I believe

landfill sites have gone the way of the dinosaur.

It is now incumbent upon all levels of government, industry and the public to devise new and environmentally sound methods for handling waste management in the province of Ontario. Having said this, perhaps a little background would be appropriate. It would be in order to highlight the former Liberal government and the current NDP government's lack of any credible waste management strategy.

Approximately four years ago the government encouraged municipalities to band together and establish local organizations to review waste management in their jurisdictions and then urged them to come up with creative solutions to waste management problems. In 1989 the Liberal government passed An Act to amend the Municipal Act, which gave municipalities power over waste management and directed them to establish waste management plans. The premise behind this legislation was sound in theory, because municipalities are best equipped to know their own waste management requirements and their problems and the solutions to them.

Two years later the NDP government brought in An Act respecting the Management of Waste in the Greater Toronto Area and to amend the Environmental Protection Act. The bill was precedent-setting, because it gave the Ministry of the Environment power to unilaterally dictate waste management procedures, which were traditionally and legally overseen by municipal governments. It also expropriated the rights of municipalities to make their own waste management decisions and steamrolled years of legislation outlined in the Municipal Act, the Ontario Municipal Board Act, the Planning Act, the Environmental Assessment Act and the Environmental Protection Act as they pertain to waste disposal systems. It limited waste disposal options and made null and void all waste management agreements a municipality may have.

With this piece of legislation the former NDP Environment minister virtually turned her back on a waste management proposal that had the overwhelming support of the elected representatives for both the town of Kirkland Lake and Metropolitan Toronto, as well as the majority of the residents of that northern community. Of course, I'm referring to the Rail Cycle North plan, which would see Metropolitan Toronto's residue after the 3Rs—garbage—shipped to the abandoned Adams mine site in the town of Kirkland Lake. It is my understanding that the elected representatives of both Metro Toronto and the town of Kirkland Lake completed a \$362-million deal in 1990 to establish the Adams mine site as a landfill for Metro Toronto's garbage. An agreement had been negotiated that was acceptable to both parties.

On the basis of the evidence that is currently available, the Rail Cycle North plan looks to be environmentally sustainable and has the supplementary and

significant benefit of providing a much-needed financial boost to an economically hard-pressed region of Ontario. As well, it is my understanding that a referendum held in the town of Kirkland Lake showed that more than 60% of the residents of that community agreed to an environmental assessment on the Rail Cycle North proposal.

I believe the Interim Waste Authority should commission or conduct a complete environmental assessment of the Kirkland Lake rail haul proposal and apply the same eight criteria it will employ in its comparative evaluation of the greater Toronto area candidate landfill sites currently under review. If the Rail Cycle North proposal passes, if it proves to be environmentally safe, it should then be implemented.

1550

Just two years after the NDP government gave the Environment minister power to unilaterally dictate waste management procedures that had traditionally and legally been overseen by municipal governments, that same government directs its Municipal Affairs minister to toss a bone back to the municipalities in the form of Bill 7. This bill will give them the appearance of having legislative authority to implement programs and strategies geared towards waste reduction. Unfortunately, Bill 7 is just one more example of this government's practice of downloading new programs without providing any necessary funding, like the money needed to cover startup costs. There is no reference in Bill 7 to startup funding.

The NDP government's unacceptable practice of increasing the number of mandatory programs while reducing financial contributions is backing municipalities into a tight corner where they will have to cut existing services and raise taxes.

Another example of this government's downloading policy occurred only last week when on April 29 the Minister of Environment and Energy stood in this Legislature and announced the next challenge facing the provincial waste reduction action plan: reaching the target of 50% reduction or more by the year 2000. The minister's 3Rs regulatory measures include blue box recycling, leaf and yard waste composting, and home composting programs for municipalities of more than 5,000 in population. It also included annual waste audits, reduction work plans and recycling for large industrial, commercial and institutional waste generators, and also packaging audits updated every two years and packaging reduction work plans.

There's no doubt that I support any initiative that will assist us in changing from a wasteful, throwaway society to one that conserves resources for future generations. But the minister's announcement is suspect in that it fails to address the startup costs for smaller rural municipalities he is now including in the provincial waste action plan.

Like his colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Environment and Energy minister has provided us with another unacceptable example of increasing the number of mandatory programs while reducing financial contributions. Once again, our municipalities will bear the brunt of the NDP policy and will be forced to cut existing services and raise taxes.

While I support the general thrust of Bill 7 in principle, I do have some reservations about this legislation. Therefore, I would urge the Minister of Municipal Affairs to send the bill to public hearings, where the concerns that I have raised and those of many others who have an interest in the issue can be properly addressed.

I spoke yesterday to the clerk of the county of Simcoe with regard to Bill 7. The clerk informs me that there are some problems with the bill. He informs me that there's a 40% grant, up to a maximum of \$100,000. He informs me that each municipality can apply for that grant but that the county of Simcoe as a whole is still only allowed up to \$100,000 also. So as I had indicated to the clerk, in that instance, instead of the county applying for the grant, as this county has assumed the overall waste management in the county of Simcoe, each municipality should be applying for it in order to receive more help in that line of funding. But that's not the answer to it.

The other problem they have in the county—and whether it pertains to this legislation specifically or not, I want to raise the issue—is the fact that now, once a county has taken over waste management, it cannot direct garbage from one municipality to the other. A minister can do that, order that to be done, but the county cannot do that.

In the county of Simcoe presently there are about 16 active sites. Some of them are coming to the end of the life of that site. They predict and tell me that by about 1997 the sites will be down to approximately four or five. They're in the process now of looking at new sites. I, for a long time, have had some reservations with regard to any new sites being established. I'm concerned that, with the modern technology we have, why is there not a better way than using landfill sites to bury garbage?

The county is looking for a site, they tell me, in the Collingwood-Stayner area. In south Simcoe they're looking for one. Just this week in Midland, site 41, which has been looked at for many years in the township of Tiny, is now going back through another process of hearings. There has been over \$1 million spent in the county of Simcoe on the north Simcoe landfill. Now they're starting the process and they inform me that the first day of the hearings it was debated about when the legal people were going to have their holidays this summer. That was the main thrust of the startup of hearings. It certainly boggles the mind to think of what

the priorities are for the people who are involved in that waste management.

Another area of concern is the amount of waste that is being transported from Ontario to the States. When we look at some of the statistics, some 223,000 tonnes of hazardous wastes were exported from Canada to the US. That's an awful lot of waste. They tell me that Metropolitan Toronto has reduced the cost of its tippage fees now because its revenues are down because of the amount of waste that's been going to the States. There's a great concern that needs addressing: the amount of waste that's going out of Ontario. Not only that; it's going to the States and being burned in incinerators. We wonder why that whole aspect of waste management is not being looked at.

Another issue I wanted to raise with regard to Bill 7 comes under the Planning Act, and that has to do with the Sewell commission, the Sewell report, and some of the recommendations it has. I listen to some of the people who speak about that very report. "Sewell's recommendations, as they now stand, would be a disaster for this province," says Hazel McCallion. The majority of presenters have expressed a great deal of trepidation over the transition period from the old Planning Act to the new one. There have been many issues raised with regard to the Sewell commission and the Planning Act.

Municipal Affairs, as well as other provincial cabinet ministries in the provincial role, is planning to allow the Minister of Municipal Affairs and other cabinet ministers to appeal any municipal planning decision within the same time frame and subject to the same rules as other objectors at the OMB stage.

These are some of the recommendations and some of the comments I'm hearing back with regard to the Sewell report. What they're saying is that priorities should be county plans, planning boards in northern Ontario and watershed planning. They tell me those are some of the priorities the Sewell commission should be looking at.

While I look at Bill 7 and look at the purpose and the powers of the inspectors, as set out in sections 208.8 to 208.11, the powers of the county in respect to waste management, as set out in section 209 of the Municipal Act, and the amendments they're bringing in. I hope there is a great thrust from the people in this province who want to have part in the public hearings on this bill.

1600

I can say that the concern that the county of Simcoe has raised with me, from county clerk Al Pelletier—I'm sure it has already discussed this and is now bringing feedback to me. So when the minister says ROMA, AMO and all the municipal associations agree with this, that is not rightly so.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): It's not true.

Mr McLean: It's not true. So I hope they will have

the chance to come before the committee and have a good, open debate on this whole Bill 7.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): I thank the honourable member for his participation. Questions and/or comments?

Mr Tilson: I'd like to thank the honourable member for his comments on this very important bill.

I think we all agree that the planning of waste management is most important. The ironic part with respect to this bill, as the member has indicated, is the passing off to the municipalities, the passing the whole issue off to the municipalities. It's ironic that this bill does do that, specifically when the government of Ontario, under the leadership of the New Democratic Party, has said, "We will not even consider the subject of incineration." Now, we could spend quite a bit of time on that: whether incineration is good or whether it's bad. But the fact of the matter is that we won't even consider it.

The second thing, as the member has referred to, is that there will be no long rail haul, notwithstanding the fact that Metro had entered into a contract to proceed with the long rail haul to Kirkland Lake. There had been a referendum, which was supported by the majority of the people in Kirkland Lake, to determine whether or not an environmental assessment should be made or a study should be made on the possibility of conducting a landfill site in the Adams mine site. When a group of people decides to ask the government, "Let's study it; let's look at it," it won't even look at the subject.

Finally, there's the whole issue of recycling. I think we're all in favour of recycling. The difficulty is, where is the money going to come from? Is it going to come from the property taxpayer? This legislation is not clear as to where the funds are going to come from. There's a financial paper that was promised by this government prior to the passing of Bill 143. I understand, through the rumour mill, that it may be available in August. Meanwhile, here we are with Bill 7, making all kinds of plans for the municipalities but not making it clear as to who's going to pay for it. The emphasis on this government seems to be on the whole subject of landfill, yet when you start mentioning recycling, it simply won't tell us how to pay for it.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): I just want to make a couple of comments about the rail haul, the Rail Cycle North proposal that has been suggested by the member.

The reality of that is that there in fact have been two economic proposals put forward: one during the committee hearings on Bill 143, when it was asked for by the member from Brampton, the Liberal critic, and that was supplied. That economic analysis clearly indicated, in no uncertain terms, that there is no advantage, no economic advantage whatsoever, in hauling waste to Kirkland Lake.

The second point I would like to make for the people of Metro, who would be interested in this as they would have to fund and pay for the bills, is that the Ernst and Young study that was commissioned to look at this analysed the cost of shipping waste from Toronto to Kirkland Lake. Of course, all of it would've been sent through the township of Vaughan and then rail hauled to Kirkland Lake. The reality is that what the Ernst and Young study clearly indicated was that in just two areas, it would cost the taxpayers of Metropolitan Toronto, over 20 years, \$1.5 billion: \$750 million for the operation of the transfer station and \$750 million for the Rail Cycle option. That's \$1.5 billion.

The honourable member asked, where are they going to get the money from? If you embark on a proposal like this and you tie up all that money in the transportation, then what you've got is fewer dollars to embark on the recycling aspect of the programs. What also would happen is that you would lose the recycling jobs that are being created in the green industry by wasting \$1.5 billion on a proposal that doesn't make any economic sense.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I listened closely to the speech by the member for Simcoe East. I think we all will recognize that the member comes with a great deal of experience in this matter and has spoken about the bill in the way he feels is best able to represent his thoughts and concerns over the legislation as proposed.

I know the member for Durham West has also spoken about the economic realities as he sees them in terms of waste haulage. I think that is interesting in that it brings to mind and to light the issue on many, many people's minds: that in an area and an issue like this, the environment must be of first order, must be paramount; that municipalities are quite capable of determining what is and is not economically reasonable and feasible for their purposes.

It is strange indeed that the member for Durham West stands in his place today and indicates to the municipalities, who have a great deal of experience in terms of financial implications, in terms of recognizing what the economic realities in their areas will be, "No, you shouldn't do it; you cannot do it," because he, the member for Durham West, understands all and recognizes what are the true financial implications. I would think that really, the municipalities, after deciding, should be able to decide what is in their best interests, always keeping in mind that what is of paramount importance is the maintenance of the environment.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I would like to start off by complimenting the member for Simcoe East on his fine presentation with respect to Bill 7 this afternoon. Certainly, his many, many years of experience in the municipal level of government bring a great deal of wealth of experience to this debate. We appreciate his contribution.

The member for Simcoe East talked about the importance of examining all waste management alternatives, and he brought into the equation once again the sensible proposal, the commonsense proposal, to at least examine the possibility of sending the excess of Metro's garbage north by rail to the Adams mine site in Kirkland Lake.

In response, we heard from the member for Durham West, who alluded to a study by Ernst and Young which indicates that it would be a very expensive proposal. Certainly our party is very concerned about the expense of government and would want to see that study and take it into consideration, but I find it quite ironic that this member for Durham West would allude to an Ernst and Young study when he sits with a government—and the Minister of Labour is there grinning—that was in no way interested in the Ernst and Young study of the economic impact of Bill 40 and the number of jobs that would be lost as a result of those damaging changes to the labour laws in Ontario.

We still fundamentally have to ask, why will the government refuse to have an environmental assessment done of that particular option when the majority of the people in that community, Kirkland Lake, in 1991 during the course of the municipal election, requested that the study be done because they want to look at the potential economic benefits that might be generated in the area of Kirkland Lake? I think it's only sensible and only prudent, and the government should set aside its complete ideological bias on this issue and go ahead and do the environmental assessment study, as the member for Simcoe East has suggested so sensibly.

The Acting Speaker: This completes participation in questions or comments. The member for Simcoe East has two minutes in response.

Mr McLean: I want to thank the member for Dufferin-Peel, Mr Tilson. He raised the issue of incineration as part of the overall waste management. Perhaps that's something the government should take into serious consideration.

The member for Durham West, Mr Wiseman, is totally against rail haul. He looked at the Ernst and Young study and he says it's right and we should be looking at that. I think that's the same group of people who studied Bill 40, and they never took any advice from them at that time. You can't have it both ways.

The member for Mississauga North, Mr Offer, raised a very important issue when he talked about environment as the number one priority. That's what I think we all should be thinking about here: The environment is the number one priority and it is the most important.

1610

I thank the member for Wellington for his comments. There's something he spoke on the other day, and I did too, which I didn't speak on today, and that had to do with the votes with regard to the two thirds that had

been in previous legislation. That is now changed to 50%.

When the Minister of the Environment was here the other day, I asked him with regard to the vote. Counties have a weighted vote: Some members will have five votes, some will have two, some will have one and some will have three. How is this weighted vote going to work within the county system? Is it going to be each municipality gets one vote?

Mr Wiseman: You mentioned that the other day.

Mr McLean: That's right, and I want to put it on the record again today to make sure that when the minister and the staff take time to refer to this, they will recognize that that issue has been raised more than once, because it is important.

When we went through, just a week ago, a county vote on county restructuring, the majority of the municipalities in the north end of the county voted against county restructuring, yet the ones in the south end had the weighted vote and passed it. Is that fair to those small municipalities that that should happen? That's in here. That's part of this bill. I would like to see it spelled out.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Wiseman: I would like to begin where the honourable member has alluded to in his speech where he said that in fact there is technology, there are available resources in order that landfill sites are not, in the future, the option or the way we should go. In fact, I would agree with that, and I'm going to try and outline some of the options that are available.

About six years ago, when I first got involved with this whole issue, I made a presentation to the Metro council where I started off by saying that there is no "away." People like to think that when they put the trash out on the curbside that they've thrown it away, while in fact there is no "away," and the more we learn about ecosystem approaches and the more we learn about how the ecosystem works, the more we're aware that what we may throw into a hole, say, in the north end of some community, the more likely it is that that is going to leach and come into the south end through either the water system or through the groundwater.

So in the beginning, I'd like to take the positive note and say that I agree with the member that there is no "away" and that we are faced with some serious problems. In fact, there is no "away" for any of the negative things that we create in our society. In fact, they all wind up in Pickering.

What is happening is that when we look at the downriver flow of contaminants and pollutants, it doesn't matter whether your site is Keele Valley, which is the Metro site in Vaughan, its leachate comes to the Durham York sewer which winds up in the Durham York sewage treatment plant, which is less than 1.5 kilometres from

my front door, and I happen to live in south Ajax.

That tells us then that there is no "away," that we're all connectants in this whole scheme of things. So what we really have to do is to move in the direction of finding alternative uses for the product for what we now call waste, and I would like to go through some of them. The possibilities of recycling are growing astronomically. They grow every day. The possibilities of creating green jobs are growing every day, and I'd just like to take us through a little walk.

When I first started sitting on the committee that listened to Bill 143, I began to hear from a lot of groups in the private sector who had alternatives to the waste issue. One of the very first presentations we heard was from a material recovering facility that is a private sector company that's going to invest in Caledon and in Peel. Hopefully, their plans are still on track and they will continue to proceed with their plans. That was a 100,000-tonnes-a-year facility.

What the material recovery facility does—this one in particular showed me a videotape, which I lent to Bob Hunter and haven't seen since—but what this material facility would do is take the waste, the waste that has not been sorted at the curbside, and bring it into the facility and then sort it into its pure systems. The goal and objective of that company was to sell what they could and give away the rest.

The economics of recycling have to be found in the realization that any product that is going to be recycled and reused has to be put into the marketplace at a price that is lower than the company that is going to use it would have to pay for raw materials coming in. So price is a very important point. It has to be lower than the price they would pay for raw materials.

It was felt that the best way of creating this system would be if the consumer paid for the collection and then the company or the material recovery facility was able to sort it and not be obligated to sell it, but could find a market by simply giving it away. In Europe this has been done, industrial parks have been created and the use of this material has added to the number of jobs and the number of green industries that are growing in Europe.

There are other groups of people. For example, those plastic pop bottles that we all see—not that I recommend their use—can now be recycled into carpets and can be used for other products and can be reused. In fact, another company in my riding of Ajax is developing technology with the assistance of a grant from this government, from the government of Ontario, to do research into microwave technology, to microwave plastics and other waste streams into their carbon component parts so that they can be reused.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: This is a very important matter, and as

the government well knows, we're quite opposed to many of the aspects of this bill. We don't appear to have a quorum and I think they should be here to listen to this.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have a quorum? Could the clerk at the table check?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is not present. Call in the members.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum now is present. The member for Durham West can resume debate.

Mr Wiseman: The interesting point I was at before the member for York Mills wanted everybody to hear my speech was that I was outlining that a company in my riding is in the process of developing microwave technology to microwave waste. I have read that plastics in their clear, pure form are worth about \$3,000 a tonne; in their mixed form they aren't worth anything. This technology will be very helpful in separating the plastics so that they can continue to be reused.

I'd also like to mention that on the news in the last little while we've been hearing an awful lot about tires and how tires are a problem. Well, there's a company in Mississauga that has developed a technology to take tires and turn them into sewer covers and sewer replacement sleeves, and this company will use upwards of 36 tires.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): For how many?

Mr Wiseman: Now a quick calculation. There are eight million sewer hole covers in Ontario. You had to ask, right? There are approximately eight million sewer hole covers. Every grate, every sewer cover on every street, has a sewer access cover.

What happens in the winter is that the frost will break the cement blocks down and they have to be dug up. All you need to do to see how much that costs municipalities is to look at the square around the access cover to find out how many in your municipality have to be replaced. What happens, and the beauty of this tire sleeve as it goes in, is that they figure it'll last about 20 years and you won't have to constantly do this.

This is money saved by the municipalities. It's jobs, jobs created in Mississauga; notice I didn't use three "jobs." Then the other part is that it's environmentally intelligent, because it creates green jobs and reduces a waste stream that is not currently being used.

Also, we're now experimenting in other areas, to use tires in the use of asphalt, in the use of underlay for carpet and for many other products. Just last week I read about gardening gowns and tool holders that they are now able to make out of tires.

1620

Mr David Winninger (London South): Not to mention doormats.

Mr Wiseman: And doormats.

Mr Tilson: Who are the doormats?

Mr Wiseman: The Tories, the Liberals.

One of the other areas that is quite exciting is in the area of recycling of asphalt. I remember reading about a year and a half ago about this machine that was created in Scarborough that takes up the asphalt, remixes it and puts it back down on the road, saving upwards of \$1 million per application, depending on the length.

Glass bottles: There's a company in Ottawa that now takes the glass bottles and crushes them. It doesn't matter if it's mixed or whatever. They crush them, they can turn it into caulk, and they make fibreglass insulation out of it. For all of those people who are watching who are in the construction industry, I would encourage that you can help this whole process of waste reduction by using fibreglass that's created out of recycled glass.

Also, as we look at what's available in the marketplace, a lot of products are now being created that could be used in the building industry. In fact, the government of Ontario, under what's called "Build Green Street" had a display at the Toronto home builders' show. In conjunction with Ortech International and the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association and the province of Ontario, the Government Services secretariat, this display was put up, and it was a display of products that are now being created out of used materials from the ICI sector, from the building sector.

The goal was to turn the mountain into a molehill, turn the waste from the construction of homes and the construction industry into a small amount by recycling. In fact, as we look through the availability of materials that are now being recycled, we can now find that there are uses for almost all materials.

I'd just like to quote from a Maclean's article from March 23, 1992:

"As well, some aggressive recyclers maintain that with some strong salesmanship and a little imagination, it is possible to market almost any material pulled from household trash. In fact, officials at the Edmonton Recycling Society, which started in 1988 and now serves 67,000 homes, found markets around the world for their products and claim that all but 6% of what they gather is recycled, including milk cartons that are shipped to Italy, where they are turned into high-quality toilet paper. Stock piles are a myth in recycling."

I think that with some very constructive work, we can reduce the waste that is in the waste stream and create constructive jobs.

I'd just like to make a comment about another company in my riding called Plastiglas. The reason I didn't use the names of the other companies is because I didn't

have their permission and they haven't been in the paper. But this company takes fibreglass and recycles fibreglass and turns it into reinforced plastics. The thin panels are easy to install, they last nearly as long as stone, and few can tell the difference.

Stratum is an innovative recycled product that utilizes 80% to 90% waste fibreglass reinforced composites, including auto parts, glass from blue boxes, iron ore slags, ceramics and waste building materials. This is an incredible application, because the building itself that this company is housed in has used their own cover material for the outside of the building, and that's a very positive sales tool for them. Since they're only about a kilometre and a half from my house, I can see it, and I'm very pleased to see that they are able to use recycled fibreglass.

As I indicated, there are uses for just about everything. I think there's an optimism that we can achieve the 50% set out in Bill 7 and that we can really do some progressive changes in the way that we use material.

But there are other areas to be gained by diversion. Not all the costs of the waste stream can be found either in the dollars and cents it costs to collect them and therefore use them, or in the costs of the diversion. Some of those costs are environmental costs. Coming from Pickering where we have Brock North, which leaches every day, where Metropolitan Toronto has to send a tanker to take the leachate out of the ground, out of a storage facility, and take it down to be treated in a sewage treatment plant, there's those costs. If they leak into the groundwater, to clean it up, that's another cost.

We have the Brock West landfill site that leaches methane, and about two years ago we had an explosion at the weigh station. An individual was hurt, not seriously, thank goodness, but there is that cost. We have the Beare Road landfill site just across the border, which leaches methane and leachate into the groundwater and into the streams, and all of that is downstream. So there is an environmental cost to not recycling.

We were told at the Bill 143 hearings, by Alcan, that we dump \$20 million of aluminum every year into landfill sites. That represents a lost advantage in the marketplace against our competitors, because to recycle aluminum is 75% less costly than to create it new. So that is a potential area where if we were to recapture this aluminum, we could create jobs and have a competitive advantage by creating and promoting your green industry.

In concluding, because I know other members of my party would like to speak, I would like to say that I think we need to take a positive approach to waste management, that we need to look at what can be done and what is being done from the point of view of creating jobs and creating a green future for our children.

Mr Elston: It was a very interesting presentation and I'm glad the member for York Mills called in the rest of

the members to hear the presentation. I was interested that the member was helpful enough to raise the issue of cost to municipalities, because that will allow me to raise the issue of the social contract in negotiations, which would of course affect the ability of a number of municipalities and school boards and conservation authorities to afford any of the new products which are being made possible through recycling and other efforts. You know, we talked about manhole covers and sleeves—

Mr Wiseman: I did not. I called them sewer access covers.

Mr Elston: Okay.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): You had the floor.

Mr Elston: There's another restructuring of the wording here, but anyway, let's call them products from used tires, and we were saying that the cost to municipalities was being reduced.

But I'll tell you, Mr Speaker, if you look at what this government is doing to municipalities and school boards and conservation authorities with the recently released statement by the Treasurer that their transfers were being chopped, by some 2% in the case of municipalities, conservation authorities being chopped by a nominal 10% but we now understand by over 40%, and school boards losing transfers as well, we know that no matter what the cost of these recycled goods which will be made possible by some of these regulations, these local organizations will be penalized. The municipalities in fact will be penalized when they come to try to implement some of these new programs, because this government has decided this late in the budget years of those organizations that it is going to change the name of the game and the way the game is played.

For my purposes, I think it would have been much better had this government been upfront with the people in those local organizations and told them last November and December that there wasn't going to be money. I thank the member for raising it. Perhaps he could give us the answer to these problems for municipalities and others.

1630

Mr Tilson: I would like to congratulate the member for Durham West on his thoughts on how you get rid of waste. It's a concern of all of us in this House, and I don't think that any of us will find fault with the examples that you've given as to how it can be done.

One of the major problems, however, that this bill is going to create—unless you come out with some other bill, which I hope you will—is the issue of funding. You talk about how jobs are going to be created, and they may well be. One of the difficulties that you have to overcome, however, is that if the municipalities are going to have to fund all of these rigorous requirements

that your government is going to be putting on the municipalities—and they are going to be very rigorous requirements—the question is, who's going to pay for them?

If the municipalities have to pay for them, naturally they either have to cut back in services or they're going to raise taxes. What a terrible position to put the municipalities in, all for the creation of jobs. Again we'll agree that the creation of jobs is most important for this province. However, if the municipalities are going to be put in the terrible position of pitting their commitment to the environment against raising taxes or going further into debt as a result of this bill, then we're being put in a very difficult position. I hope that this bill will go to committee. In fact, I think it must go to committee.

I would encourage all of the remarks that have been made by the member for Durham West on the groups that are putting forward different ideas on recycling—I think we need to know more about that, but we also need to know more about how we're going to pay for it. Hopefully, in his response he will give us some sort of indication as to the financial paper that the government has been promising since prior to Bill 143, perhaps a different piece of legislation that's going to clarify how all of this recycling and reuse and composting and everything else that we all want is going to be paid for.

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I'd like to certainly compliment the member for Durham West, especially for pointing out some of the innovative ideas that some of the municipalities and corporations especially in his riding have come up with in reducing waste.

I'd just like to add a couple. Bell Canada, for example, in its offices in Thunder Bay has voluntarily diverted 80% of its waste from garbage, to the benefit of its bottom line. The IGA store in Sundridge, which is up near North Bay, makes 90 fewer trips to the landfill. Food waste is sold to local pig farmers and cardboard sold in Toronto, with revenue from cardboard sales covering the cost of shipping.

So in fact, just to add to what the member for Simcoe West was saying, there are savings and I think that in the long run this particular bill—

Mr Elston: You mean Durham West.

Mr Hayes: —Durham West, thank you—is certainly an investment in the future.

I must also reiterate what the Minister of Environment and Energy yesterday had spoken about, about keeping the funding that we are committed to by this government and to help municipalities to reach those goals.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments? The member for Mississauga North.

Mr Offer: Dealing with the member's comments and in particular with Bill 7, I think it goes without saying that all within this Legislature and all outside this Legislature want to, as best as we can, reduce waste and

certainly reduce the amount of waste that is going to landfill sites. I think there are a great many examples of companies that are meeting and attempting to meet the challenge in the area of recyclable materials and in the area of reducing waste. I believe that the consumer, the home owner, is in fact taking a lead role.

The bill before us—and I know in a short while I'll have an opportunity to more fully discuss the bill—talks about the issue of user-pay, it talks about the issue of upper-tier municipalities taking over responsibility, but the issue of who pays for these initiatives is one which is quite silent and I believe it's a valid comment.

I believe that because this issue is raised, opponents should not read into that concern as being the concern of someone who is not in favour of reducing waste or, in fact, reducing refuse going to the landfill site. It is, in fact, an extremely valid point that must be addressed by the government of the day. The government of the day must clearly be able to indicate to all those who share a common concern of promoting recycling as to who is going to pay for these initiatives.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Durham West, you have two minutes.

Mr Wiseman: As you know, the issue of waste management in my riding is a hot topic and the local newspaper, the Pickering's Bay News, in its editorial said—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Quorum call, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: Mr Speaker, a quorum is not present.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is present and the member for Durham West, you can take your two minutes again.

Mr Wiseman: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The local newspaper, the Bay News, clearly indicates, "The New Democrats deserve their praise for their efforts here," referring to Bill 7. "They've zeroed in on the essential key to solving the current waste crisis, placing the onus of the problem squarely on the shoulders of those responsible. The more waste you produce, the more it should cost you out of pocket to get rid of it. The new provincial law at least allows for the opportunity to recognize that fact."

The question about who's going to pay has to do with how much can be diverted and how much is currently going into the landfill sites and not being diverted, and how much they're paying to tip it.

For example, the Durham Board of Education, up until very recently, was paying \$152 a tonne to tip into the Brock West landfill site. The Metropolitan Toronto

school boards were paying nothing. So it's going to cost them to get into the game, whereas the Durham Board of Education, for every tonne that it diverted, it saved \$152; now it's \$90.

A response to their question is, clearly some of the costs are already being paid, but what needs to be done is to divert so that you can save those costs. A composting facility in a town that is paying \$30, \$40, \$150 a tonne to tip into a landfill site, if all they have to do is pay for the cost, if it's less than that, then their current tax revenues are already being allocated for that; but if they're not paying for their waste management, as is the case in Metropolitan Toronto, then, yes, sometimes their costs are going to go up.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further debate? The member for Mississauga North.

1640

Mr Offer: I'm pleased to join in debate on this bill, Bill 7, and in terms of some opening comments on the bill, I've had occasion to read the bill and I know that there are a number of people who are watching over the parliamentary channel, and I think that we should be aware that the bill is really a bill of amendments to other pieces of legislation in the main.

When you read proposed pieces of legislation, most often you get the story as to what the legislation is designed to do and how it's designed to accomplish its purpose. Bill 7 doesn't fall in that category because it is really a compilation of amendments to other pieces of legislation, such as the Municipal Act, the Regional Municipalities Act, the County of Oxford Act, the District Municipality of Muskoka Act, the Municipality of Metropolitan Act, and it goes on and on.

I say that not to be critical of the legislation but rather to express that this is how this bill is designed. I bring this point out because as we speak in second reading on the bill many municipalities which will be affected by the bill have really not had the opportunity to look at the bill, to put together the amendments and what the amendments will mean to them and to fall upon a position. I understand that. The municipalities at this point in time are very much concerned with the recent announcements by the government dealing with the cutback in services and how it will affect them. They have been preoccupied with the government cutting back on the services they provide to their residents, together with this whole social contract issue.

So, as I've heard from municipalities that they believe that Bill 7 may meet some of their concerns, I do issue a word of caution that the municipalities have really not had the opportunity to deal and look at the bill in the way in which they will. My comments are muted in that respect because I am currently awaiting the responses from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and as well the member municipalities in order to obtain from them a real appreciation as to how this bill will affect

them and of course all the people who live in this province by virtue of residing in municipalities.

Going through the bill, I have a number of questions which are not answered. I think this type of bill requires public hearings to take place. I am hopeful that the parliamentary assistant will take note of this comment of mine, the comment again being the need for public hearings, so that members of this assembly who are in the committee can hear the comments and the position of the municipalities, as well as many other participants involved in the waste issue, before we give final approval to the bill.

The parliamentary assistant is present in this Legislature and I know that when I am finished speaking the parliamentary assistant, in the two minutes that are accorded members, will have the opportunity to stand in his place and clearly indicate to the municipal representatives, to interested parties in waste disposal in this province, that it is and will be the position of the government that this bill will, after second reading, move to full public hearings.

I will, as will many others, be looking forward to the parliamentary assistant's response to that request. It is my belief that this is a bill which demands this. It demands this because it talks to issues of significance in every community and, as well, it is a bill that the municipalities have not had the opportunity to fully digest. I believe that as legislators we have to afford those who are involved in this crucial sector the opportunity of coming before a committee to share with us their reaction to the bill.

Dealing with the bill itself, and I've already alluded to the issue of amendments, and that's how the bill is somewhat styled, there are two areas that I certainly would like to deal with. The first area is that Bill 7 does give to municipalities the right to establish user fees. I want to deal with that issue in some depth, because I believe that this issue of user fees in waste disposal and waste management is something which the general public will want to fully appreciate and understand what it means.

The second area that I want to discuss, and I think that I'll be briefer in that area, is that this bill will allow an upper-tier municipality, for example a regional municipality, to take the waste disposal services from a lower-tier municipality. Let me put some meaning to that, and I'll deal with that issue firstly.

I am the member for Mississauga North. Obviously the city of Mississauga is part of a regional municipality, the regional municipality of Peel. The city of Mississauga currently looks after its own waste disposal. Our waste, in front of our residences, is picked up by individuals who are contracted with and through the city of Mississauga. The regional municipality of Peel does not have any responsibility in that area.

My reading of the bill is that if the regional municipality of Peel wishes to take over that responsibility from the city of Mississauga, even though the city of Mississauga does not want it to, then the mechanism has been put in place that the region could take over that responsibility, and that is a mechanism that would apply in each lower- and upper-tier municipality throughout the province.

There is the need for a requisite number of votes, and reading this legislation clearly indicates to me that even if all of the councillors and the mayor of the city of Mississauga did not wish the regional municipality of Peel to take over waste disposal, it would still be taken over if the region so desired.

I would invite the parliamentary assistant, if he wishes, in the time permitted, to show me where that can't happen, because I have been advised by ministry officials that in fact that is exactly the process that has been put in place. I believe that this might be the cause of some concern. I believe we have to take a look at whether this bill will now be creating—and I hope not—a confrontation between lower- and upper-tier municipalities over this issue of waste management. We know that the issue of waste management is one to which there are great emotions attached. I am concerned that in a piece of legislation we are setting the framework in place to advance, in some instances, that area of confrontation. I would be very concerned, and it is an issue and a question which I bring forward to the government, to the parliamentary assistant. I know that the bill does in fact permit that to happen, and I have verified that with municipal officials. So what I would hope to hear from the parliamentary assistant today is that the government is ready to entertain amendments so that needless confrontation can be avoided.

1650

Another area of the bill which I believe demands amendment is a confusion that has arisen over the scope of the bill. Let me be clear. As we know, in the area of waste management there are many private companies which operate according to rules and regulations and licences within municipalities. It is my belief that Bill 7 will not encroach in any way, shape or form on the continuing right of the private sector to be involved in waste management.

The bill is very fuzzy, very unclear in this area. It speaks, even in its definition of "waste," of dealing with "industrial solid waste," "municipal refuse." In the area and definition of "waste management system," it does not seem to be confined to systems that are and have been within municipal control. We will be looking for a clear statement and clear amendments by the government in order to meet the very genuine concerns of individuals and companies in this area that this bill will not encroach on their ability to do what they have been doing quite well for many, many years.

That, as an aside, is another reason why a bill of this kind should be going out to committee. It should be going out to committee so that we can hear from, really, the professionals in this area as to how they view the bill, as to how they view the current provisions and the definitions of the current provisions—it may impact upon them—and how this bill could be amended in order to address those concerns.

The area I want to deal with at this point is the area of user fees. What does that mean? In this respect, I see that Bill 7 was introduced April 21, but I cannot forget that just after this bill was introduced, the Minister of Environment indicated that blue box and composting would be mandatory for all municipalities with a population greater than 5,000 people. We have Bill 7, which allows user-pay, and we'll talk about that for a little while. A week later, the Minister of Environment says mandatory blue box, mandatory composting for every municipality in this province with a population of greater than 5,000.

In the area of blue box recycling and composting, we all recognize and are supportive of initiatives in this area and certainly of reducing waste going to landfill. But the Minister of Environment said something else. He said that all municipalities must have this in place. There are a number of municipalities with a population greater than 5,000 people that do not have blue boxes. There are more municipalities with a population of greater than 5,000 people that do not have composting.

I've been speaking to my constituents about this. We know that a blue box is not just a box you put in front of your residence. There is something more to it. Composting is not just something that's in your side- or backyard. A blue box and composting program requires specialized trucks. They require source separation facilities. There will be an employment issue. Staffing is required.

As you stand in favour of initiatives like that, I think it is absolutely essential and valid to ask, who pays for this? Who is going to pay for the mandate and directive of the Minister of Environment? Will it be found throughout Bill 7? That, to me, I will say at the outset, is a concern.

If Bill 7 is set up to allow for the financing of blue boxing and composting, we have some questions we want to ask. This is not to be read as being opposed, but I will tell you, as I speak to people in my riding, they believe that there is a different role of government in this day and age, that it is no longer right and proper for a government to say, "Municipalities, you do this, and you also find the money to do what we have directed you to do."

Members from the government side chuckle at this. You know, it's absolutely incredible to me that it was just a couple of weeks ago that the government announced clearly that it was going to give less money

to municipalities, that it was going to cut the amount of money it had agreed to give to municipalities by not less than 2%, and I believe some municipalities are going to get a greater cut.

So we have the provincial government saying it doesn't have any money; in fact, it has to reduce costs. We have municipalities saying: "We are doing the best we can. We are cutting and budgeting to the bone. We don't have any more flexibility." Then the provincial government says to the municipality: "You were expecting X amount of dollars from us and you budgeted on that basis. Well, you're not going to be receiving all of that money. You'll have to find it somewhere else." And then they say, "Not only that, but if you haven't got a blue box program, you better have one, and if you don't have a composting program, you better have one."

I think people are saying: "Okay, how do we buy, where do we get, a composter? Who's going to provide that to us?" I know there are some capital projects in place, but municipalities are saying that, even with the existing programs in place, it's not enough. "We are being cut and we need even more help." The government is not only not giving more help, it's giving less help, but also mandating more on the municipalities.

So who is going to pay? This brings me back to Bill 7. I question the government as to whether some of those funds may come from the user-pay provisions of the bill. I have an article that explains how these things are happening in many other parts of the United States, and I'm wondering if the government, without specifically saying this, is in fact going to be following this.

1700

In Seattle there is a unit-charge system. Customers choose from four sizes of receptacles. They range in price from \$11 per month to \$32 per month. There are examples in other jurisdictions where you have to purchase your garbage bags, and if you don't, and if you don't use the proper bag, then it won't be picked up.

I'm saying that these are types of issues which demand public hearings. Is that what this is all about? If it is, let's be up front and let's say that's how we are going to fund the Minister of Environment's announcements about mandatory blue box and composting across the province. I think people might have something to say about that, because it has nothing to do with whether people do or do not support recycling and reducing waste to landfill—I certainly do support that—but it does have everything to do with the issue of who pays. I hope, and we will certainly be demanding, that this bill go to public hearings and to committee stage.

One of the things I find somewhat concerning is that we hear of some successes in the area of recycling, but I haven't heard from the government as to the efforts it is going to be making in terms of expanding the products collected in the blue box. This is the issue most municipalities are facing. Everyone is supportive of the

blue box campaign but what I am hearing is that we are separating, we are collecting, but there are no markets for that which we are doing and there are no initiatives by the government for moving out and expanding those markets so that which is collected in front of our homes can be, in a way, recycled and reused.

If we can't sell the material, if we can't reuse the material, then the blue box, as supportive as we are of it, has a major problem. There are companies which are taking the initiative, but we have to recognize that something more is required, and that is for government to recognize that this is an extremely important issue. In fact, it is an issue which will, and may very well, determine the success and future of the blue box campaign.

I believe that with proper government support and initiatives, we can make the blue box initiative and campaign the success it should be. The government has been quite silent in this matter. I believe there is an obligation and a responsibility on the government to do this. I believe there's an obligation and responsibility on the government to indicate in Bill 7 what it means to the residents in this province.

What does "user-pay" truly and really mean? The government has not been up front. I believe what they are going to be saying is: "Well, we don't really know what it means. All we're doing is giving the municipality the right to implement a user-pay system." I believe that is sort of taking a curious—not an upfront approach, because the government must be aware of the purpose for which it is giving this power. They must be aware in what circumstances they expect it to be used. They must be aware in terms of the needs of municipalities.

I have concerns with the bill. I recognize, as I said at the outset, that any information I've received from municipalities is that though they haven't had opportunity to particularly read the bill in all of its implications and ramifications, they do recognize some areas which are areas that they wanted to be involved in.

I believe that public hearings are absolutely mandatory, and I've now said that issue about three or four times, because I want the parliamentary assistant to say to members on this side of the Legislature and to those who are watching this debate, that the government is committed to full public hearings, that it will abide by our request to have this bill moved to the committee for public hearings.

I want to hear from the parliamentary assistant that amendments will be brought in which clearly address the concerns from the private sector involved in waste management, that this bill in no way, shape or form will encroach in their areas of waste management.

I want the parliamentary assistant to stand in his place to indicate that they want to deal with the issue of potential confrontation of upper- and lower-tier municipi-

palities in dealing with the concerns as to how an upper-tier municipality may take over waste management from a lower-tier municipality, even if the lower-tier municipality does not wish this to happen.

I believe that all members recognize the emotion around waste management disposal. I've not spoken, Mr Speaker, as you will know, about landfill sites. I think that it is an issue which is debated daily. Bill 7, I do not believe, focuses in on that matter.

In passing, I come, as the member for Mississauga North, from the area that has the Britannia landfill site. The Britannia landfill site was extended by that government without any hearing. The Britannia landfill site was extended without the people in my riding or in the city of Mississauga or in the regional municipality of Peel having the opportunity to say their position, their concerns about what that means to their community.

I can tell you that this government, in having a Minister of Environment who does not have that portfolio full time, and having the history that this government has had in terms of waste, long-term sites, is one which is concerning to certainly the people in my riding, because they have felt the sharp punching of the government on their rights in terms of a landfill site in their area. There is a great deal of concern as to the commitment of this government, the commitment to true environmental protection, the commitment to people truly being able to listen.

Send this bill out to committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): I thank the honourable member for his participation in the debate. Questions and/or comments? Further debate?

Mr Stockwell: No, questions and comments.

Mr Tilson: Questions and comments. I have a question.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Dufferin-Peel.

Mr Tilson: For my neighbour from Mississauga North, one of the major issues that I think he raised in this is the concern of our—"municipal partners" is the terminology that's developed, the concern they have is that they want some input in this bill. The impression that's been given by the minister is that AMO and all the other larger groups, ROMA, have approved this legislation. That's not true, and I'm going to be referring in my comments a little later as to what AMO feels about this.

1710

My friend the member for Mississauga North certainly has emphasized the need to go to committee to discuss all of the issues that are being raised in this House. The smaller municipalities—and I guess he represents the southern part of Peel and I represent the northern part of Peel, the town of Caledon, but I also represent a number of municipalities in the county of Dufferin—they are

quite concerned over comprehending this whole issue, and I've taken, whether it be as the member for Mississauga North commented, the issue of composting, the issue of recycling, the blue box, the trucks, the staffing, all of the things that the member for Mississauga North quite rightfully referred to.

It all boils down to, do the smaller municipalities have the capacity to pay for all this, whether it be the county of Dufferin as the upper tier—but the fact of the matter is, this is a small municipality. It doesn't have the wealth and the power of the larger urban municipalities. They're going to need a lot of financial assistance.

This government has no business bringing forward this legislation unless it knows how it's going to be paid for, because property taxes are going to go up, jobs are going to be lost not gained, as has been suggested by members of the government, because people are going to go broke. The property taxes will go through the roof if the municipalities are going to have to pay for these plans that are being put forward by this government.

I congratulate the member and hope and agree with him that this matter be put off to committee.

Mr Wiseman: I'd like to address one of my comments to the member's comment about markets and his claim that this government hasn't done anything to acquire markets. This is incorrect. In fact there's a large amount of money that has been placed into companies to do research and development. I went through a whole host of products that are being created. I'd like to reiterate a couple now from the "Build Green Street" project that the Management Board of Cabinet has been working with, Ortech International and the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association.

I'd like to say that in addition to the other items I talked about, they're making shingles from tires that look like slate and that can be applied to buildings and are a wonderful application. They have taken scrap wood and have chipboarded it into products and are using it for countertops and for other cheap moulding, railings and so on that can be painted. They are taking a whole host of products, such as metals to make soffits and fascia out of. These are all purchasable now through the manufacturers that are producing these. These are jobs in the area.

But he is right in one area where he is saying that there are difficulties. The difficulty is that you can get funding in this province from the banks if you've got real estate, if you've got a building, but you can't get funding if you've got an idea. So one of the biggest inhibitors to the growth of recycled industries, from recycled products and the production of patents and the expansion of these, is the fact that companies cannot get money to expand. They can't get credit; they can't get a credit line from the banks. I think this is a major problem that needs to be dealt with, and we as a province are working on it through the Ontario Development Corp.

Mr Stockwell: First off, I'd like to say this is a very important piece of legislation. It's a piece of legislation that will affect all municipalities in the province of Ontario. It's a legislation that is requiring through legislation, through law, expenditures by local municipalities and they find it to be very important.

What is very disturbing and distressing, I will say, is this. This is one of the ministries that this government went to great lengths to explain was somewhat complex and detailed enough to require not only a minister but also a junior minister. It seems to me that it would be incumbent on this government, considering the complexity and the concern for this particular issue, to have at least one of them here today. Yet when we look across the floor, not the minister, not the junior minister deem it worthy to show up to hear about the concerns that we bring from our constituents and municipalities with respect to this legislation.

Not only is the concern about the blue box program and the fact it's crumbling before our very eyes—and if this piece of legislation goes through, from a financial viewpoint, it will be unsavable in two years—they're talking about this program in terms of the financial implications of the social contract at \$500 million; the financial implications of disentanglement at who knows how much money; the foisting off of responsibilities that should be shouldered at the provincial level on to municipalities for untold hundreds of millions of dollars.

Not a minister, not the junior minister consider it worth their while to come to this House and hear the concerns of the constituents right across this province that we represent. That, to me, is totally unacceptable.

Mr Hayes: I'd like to thank the member for Etobicoke West for his contribution towards this bill and addressing the comments of the member for Mississauga North.

I know I don't have very long, just a short two minutes to deal with this, but the member had some concerns. I'll just touch on a couple of them right now. He spoke about the public having input into this.

Yes, this will go to committee and we will allow the public to have input on this. I'd just like to say one thing also, when we talk about AMO—I know the member from the Conservatives says he's going to address this—there's a news release that was put out that AMO supports the new waste management powers for municipalities. "We support the province's legislation which represents a close fit with the recommendations AMO has made in the past for additional municipal legislation authority for waste management activities."

I would be remiss if I did not mention that one of their concerns, and rightfully so, is the funding part of it. We'll certainly address this and we have committed that we will not cut back on the spending for the blue box programs.

The other thing, talking about the composting and the blue box, first of all, the residents do not have to compost, but the municipalities have to make that program available to them.

Interjection.

Mr Hayes: There is a difference. I know in Essex county we have the system. I have a composter in my backyard. I don't have to have it, but the program is there for you if you want to use it. I think that's very important.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Mississauga North has two minutes to make response.

Mr Offer: Just in response to the comments made by the member for Essex-Kent, in the area of composting, I believe it was the Minister of Environment and Energy just last week who indicated that it will be mandatory for all municipalities with a population of greater than 5,000 people to have both blue box and composting.

I believe in your response it looked a little optional to me, but I think in the response by the Minister of Environment, with which you're not affiliated, that in fact the news releases and the press conference that the Minister of Environment had was that it was mandatory. And the question, rightly said, is who is going to pay? Who is going to help the municipalities to comply with the directives of the Minister of Environment?

The member for Durham West, in the area of marketability of recycled material, it's just incredible. You stand here and you speak for 30 minutes or so and you say that there are examples of companies that are using materials. It's as if no one on that side is listening. Why then is there such a problem with blue box programs in the province if it isn't on the basis of there isn't the market for the materials they are collecting, notwithstanding the incredible work being done by the private sector in dealing with this issue?

I bring forward the matter as an issue which the government must get involved in. They must get involved in expanding markets for the materials that are collected through the blue box campaign. There are problems that are being felt through municipalities and by municipalities, and I hope that the government will start listening to some of the people who have concerns in this area and start acting upon those concerns so that once more the environment can be of paramount importance to a government. That to date has just not been the case.

1720

Mr Tilson: I'd like to participate in this debate on Bill 7, which is the Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act. This bill, Mr Speaker, as you know and all members of this House know, was introduced on April 21 last, and I guess the question that certainly many of us on the opposition side have is: What is the rush? Has there been adequate consultation with respect to this bill?

There are a lot of questions that are starting to be asked more and more, particularly as the smaller municipalities and the private firms that dispose of our waste realize what this bill is doing.

Now, I know there were some discussion papers that were put out and there was some consultation—not a lot. Certainly, the municipalities didn't know a great deal about it. Yes, I'm aware that AMO did do a paper and I will be referring to that shortly, but the fact of the matter is that a lot of municipalities are very concerned and are very afraid of the philosophy, the general intent of this bill. Most of them, in fact all of them, are in favour of the whole subject of waste management, and the general intent of the bill is to think of other ways of reducing our waste, because there is no way that is certainly popular and they're all very difficult, whether it's incineration, long rail haul, filling in dump sites. All of these are very serious problems.

But I will say, and I've tried to raise it in some of the responses to some of the speeches that have been made this afternoon and elsewhere, that we need to know the whole picture. It's like what happened when we got into Bill 143. We got into Bill 143 and we didn't know where the sites were, the regions. Mainly, Bill 143 deals with the sites in the three regions of the greater Toronto area. We didn't know where those sites were. We didn't know anything about the cost. We still don't know a great deal about the cost.

The government, it's become more and more clear, is saying of the IWA, "Oh, well, they're independent from us," notwithstanding the fact that the IWA was created by Bill 143. It was created by an act of this Legislature. In fact, I believe the deputy minister or certainly assistant deputy ministers sit on the board, and the people who were appointed to the IWA were appointed by this government. So they have a great deal to do with this government, notwithstanding the former Minister of the Environment and the present Minister of Environment saying, "Well, you know, they're doing a great job, they're on their own and we really don't have anything to do with it."

The problem that has surfaced is a similar problem that is developing with this particular piece of legislation. No one, whether it's this government, Mr McIntyre of the IWA, the representatives in the regions, the municipal politicians, the other interest groups, the citizens, the ratepayer groups, no one knows what this is going to cost. As of the end of April, as I understand, the cost to the IWA, the dollars that have been spent by the IWA, is in excess of \$30 million. That's before we get into environmental assessments, that's before we pick out the final sites, that's before we get into expropriation. It seems to me that if you're going to put forward a plan, whether it's recycling, whether it's incineration, whether it's landfill sites, whether it's perhaps other things, composting, all of these other

things, we need to know all of the picture.

I must say the member for Durham West—whom we often criticize because of his philosophy of life, but he did come forward today with a number of ideas that are being put forward by people in this province to dispose of our waste. I think any government would be remiss if it didn't pursue those areas, at least look at them. That's been the problem with this government, its determination to simply look at the landfill site, specifically in the greater Toronto area. You know, "We've got to create three superdumps."

Now, of course, the Minister of Environment has come forward in a statement saying with respect to how much the reduction as a result of recycling's going to be, and that's very admirable. I hope it will increase. I think we all hope it will increase.

The problem is, and I emphasize this, what are all these wonderful plans going to cost, and more importantly, who's going to pay for them? It may well be we simply will have to prioritize what we're going to spend, because we have to get rid of our waste somehow. We either have to reduce it, recycle it or put it in the landfill sites or put in incineration. It may be all those things. The difficulty is, as I emphasize over and over and over, we don't know what it's going to cost and we don't know who's going to pay for it.

The municipalities, your municipal partners that are referred to—this wonderful word "partnership" that's referred to—they are concerned. They are concerned about their taxes. Continual governments, and yes, including the Conservative governments, including the Liberal governments, including the NDP governments, have passed down costs to municipal taxpayers, and I fear about this legislation.

I'm told that this financial paper that's been promised by this government, which was promised prior to Bill 143, is on its way. It's on its way and may be out this summer some time. Who knows what the real rumour is, but that's what I'm being told. And it may well be that this paper will explain what the government's intent is as to who's going to pay for it, because if there isn't substantial financial assistance from the government to pay for the studies that are going to be needed to be done—and the member for Mississauga North raised all of those issues of being obliged, being by law obliged to get into the subject of composting, to get into the blue box program, and all of the things that are related to those programs: the staffing, the trucks, the transfer stations and all of those costs. They all cost a great deal of money, and if the property taxpayer is going to have that burden—because it's not the property taxpayer alone who creates all of the waste. We all create waste. I've often been very confused, particularly with the former Minister of the Environment, who says each individual area must get rid of its own waste. The difficulty is that many of us live out in the country and we travel to

Toronto and we work in Toronto and we create garbage in Toronto, whether it be in Toronto or the larger regional areas. We're a very mobile society, and it's a provincial problem.

I mean, who's to say, for example, that garbage that may be in Mississauga and has to be disposed of by Mississauga—and of course you can't have a dump site in the middle of Mississauga; that's impossible. But to follow the rationale, who's to say that perhaps the northern rail haul may not be an answer? Why can't we at least consider it? Why can't we at least look at it?

On the subject of incineration, for example—and I have spoken about this in the past—I honestly haven't formulated an opinion as to whether incineration is good or whether it's bad. I do look at other countries around the world, the Americans, the Japanese, the Europeans, who are into incineration, and they're disposing of their energy from waste. They're doing wonderful things with incineration. They've said that in the last 20 years, certainly since the former minister—I know the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, when she was on municipal council, said, "We can't have incinerators in my riding," and it may well have been that incinerators at that time were a bad thing. I don't want to start saying how old she is, but certainly that was a long time ago, and I'm told that the scrubbers have developed substantially, improved substantially since that time.

Incineration may not be the only answer. Obviously we have to look at the 3Rs, or the 5Rs. Remember when it used to be 5Rs? Somehow it's been reduced to 3Rs. And yes, we've got to look at the landfill sites. But we've got to look at all of these things, and this bill is now saying, "Well, maybe we should look at all of these things."

But the question is, who's going to pay for it? You people are broke. I mean, the banter that's been going on from both sides of this House during question period as to social contracts and budgets and outrageous tax increases and people losing their jobs—we're in serious financial difficulties, and you put forward these plans. Money doesn't come from the air. It has to be raised somehow.

1730

I simply say that there have now been comments made that this bill will be going to committee. I hope at that time that we will have the financial position paper on how we're going to solve the economics of it and that you're not going to leave it like you did with the IWA, that you're not going to create this monster that's literally out of control, doing as it pleases, spending money as it pleases, is accountable to no one, and not have any idea how it's going to be paid for or how much it's going to cost.

I asked a question of the government several weeks ago as to what exactly it was going to cost: Was there a budget figure as to what it was going to cost to reach the

final stage of having three dump sites in the three regions? Now maybe it'll come forward, but somehow I doubt it, because I don't think they have any idea, no idea what the environmental assessments are going to cost, what the expropriations are going to cost. Look at these wonderful areas in southern Ontario: farm lands. Forget about the Sewell report, forget about the food lands policy of the Ministry of Agriculture as created by one of the former governments. Forget about the agricultural policy. They're putting dumps on farm lands, 100-year-old farms. It's bizarre; that policy is bizarre.

We need to look at all of these things and I do hope that sufficient time, substantial time, will be allowed in the committee process to enable the people in the municipalities, the ratepayers, to come and talk on all of these subjects, and that at that time we will be able to hear the government's plan as to how this whole process, which is a good process—I'm not going to be critical of some of the ideas that are coming forward as to what we need to do; I think we need to do a lot more. But I need to know how you're going to pay for it.

Bill 7 contains amendments to the Municipal Act, the Regional Municipalities Act, 13 regional acts and the Municipal Affairs Act. That in itself certainly raises the subject of a complication that needs to be looked at from all over. I don't know whether the press release came from AMO or not. AMO did approve the philosophy of it, the general intent of what you're trying to do—we all approve of the general intent of what you're trying to do—but it's concerned about a number of things.

They're concerned about this weighted vote factor. I get worried about the restructuring of the county process that we've had in the past. The counties are very troubled about that. It's almost as if this whole subject is coming through the back door. I don't think you've thought that process out. I think you need to talk to the counties, I think you need to talk to the regional municipalities on the whole process of voting. All of that, I'm sure, will be revealed at the committee stage, when we'll have an opportunity to listen to the municipalities and others who are involved in this whole process.

This legislation, as has been emphasized, will provide municipalities with the legislative authority to implement programs and strategies geared towards waste reduction, and as the Minister of Environment indicated—I believe it was last week or within the last couple of weeks—waste diversion targets of 25% by 1992 and 50% by the year 2000 on the base year of 1987 were put forward. Those are very admirable positions, notwithstanding the fact that the city of Seattle has a similar program, has a long rail haul—they haul their garbage for 350 miles, I think—and is up to 60%. It may well be that the committee will want to look at Seattle, it may well be that we'll want to look into its processes.

Again, if we're going to make vague statements about how we're going to improve the process, we need to

look at everything: all of the potential plans, all of the costs, and how we're going to do it. That, to date, hasn't been done.

Just to reiterate what has been said, I think we should clarify what Bill 7 is doing. It gives to the municipalities the—and I might comment that it's almost a turnaround when you start thinking about the IWA process. The province of Ontario has come into the three regions and said: "We're going to have a dump in each region, and we're going to tell you where we're going to have it and you're not going to have any say in that. You know we're going to have some creature called the IWA that's going to come in and have hearings, none of which is accountable, and it's going to tell you." The province is now saying, "We're now going to let you municipalities look at all this stuff." It's almost as if you've had second thoughts, but I'll tell you, the monster you've created isn't going to be solved by Bill 7.

In any event, the new sections give the municipalities these explicit powers:

— To establish, maintain and operate a waste management system. A waste management system is defined as "facilities and services for the management of waste, including the collection, removal, transfer, processing, storage, reduction, reuse, recycling and disposal of waste." It really is great stuff, and I applaud the minister for those things.

— Second, to establish fees for the use of any part of a waste management system.

— Third, to require individuals generating waste to separate at the point of collection.

Again, there are going to be costs related with all of these things. When municipalities get into these things, they're going to have to have studies done, they're going to have to hire staff, they're going to have to hire consultants. The cost is just going to be unbelievable. We know that, because the Environmental Assessment Act and other pieces of legislation say that you must meet certain standards. So we know it's going to cost big bucks, and the question is, who's going to pay for it?

— Fourth, prohibiting and regulating dumping and disposal at facilities. Again, very admirable. Who's going to pay for it?

— Fifth, to appoint inspectors to obtain information relating to sites or facilities. This is going to mean a greater bureaucracy for the municipalities. I would hope that the province is going to provide some sort of major financial assistance to enable all of these things.

— Sixth, market products from waste material. That's been a problem, of course; there have been criticisms. I'd like to hear from people like Mayor Lastman, who simply says that the blue box program is failing. I'm not so sure it is, but I'd like to hear from him, because certainly now it's going to be the municipalities' problem, it's going to be Metro's problem. Mr Lastman

won't like that, he won't like that one iota.

That's the problem you're creating. You're going to create a war between individual municipalities. It's a very difficult position you're going to be putting municipalities in, not only the whole downloading process but the political process, this voting business on which we've seen much discussion during the restructuring process that's gone on, particularly in the county sections. I will tell you, the wars that are going to develop over this subject, the political wars that you're causing, are unbelievable.

The weighted vote issue is certainly something I'm not going to spend a great deal of time on, but there's no question that in the committee process—or perhaps the minister will rise in his place and explain it a little bit better. I don't think it's been thought out because it's almost a backhanded way of bringing restructuring into the province of Ontario without adequate debate from our municipal partners.

The bill revises the conditions under which a county may assume waste management responsibility from the local municipalities. An amendment to subsection 209(4) of the Municipal Affairs Act allows a county to assume any or all waste management functions if a majority vote on county council representing a majority of local municipalities vote in favour, and current legislation requires two thirds of votes on a county council to take over responsibility from the local municipality.

In my own riding—and it's pitting small against large and large against small municipalities—one councillor simply says, and told me, and this is on a cursory review after seeing the press releases and a cursory review of the bill, that he doesn't like the idea of a waste management voting procedure whereby at least one representative from each municipality votes on the bylaw. This, he says, doesn't represent the majority of the population, and he says he'd rather have a bylaw passed on the basis of the majority of the municipalities that represent the majority of the population.

1740

I need to consult more as well, as I think all of us do, because all of us are in the predicament of representing small municipalities and larger municipalities in our specific ridings, unless of course you represent a riding which is part of a larger region, and that yet creates another situation.

Mr Wiseman: You're darned right it does.

Mr Tilson: Well, sure it does, and we need to look at this, because I'll tell you, the municipal politicians are not going to like this. Some will and some won't, but it starts up that whole process that creates a lot of difficulty.

I would hope that the government officials and perhaps the staff that advise you will relook at that section. It may be something that we can solve in the

committee stage. It may be that the appropriate amendments can be prepared in which this issue can be resolved. But we're going to have to spend some time on it. We certainly can't go the way we have been, just sort of ramming it through. We need to spend a substantial amount of time on that subject.

Sections 6 to 9 of the bill amend the 13 regional municipalities acts to grant the regional council the authority to designate one or more facilities for the receiving, dumping and disposing of waste.

I made a few inquiries to some of the municipalities in my riding and one of them asked the question to me that if county council took the responsibility for one of these matters that are being proposed by Bill 7, for example, recycling, and after two or three years decided that it no longer wanted to provide the recycling service, notwithstanding the fact that I believe it's mandatory—I don't think they can—

Mr Wiseman: Regulations say they can't do that.

Mr Tilson: That's right, but they may be put in the position where they're saying, "We don't want it." Would the municipalities then be responsible to provide the recycling service? There are questions like that that we need to clarify.

One of the other areas, of course, that was raised in my riding, specifically the county of Dufferin, and I'm sure this occurs in similar rural municipalities, is that there are some of the towns and the villages, specifically the towns in some of the rural areas, where they have garbage pickup twice a week, and in others they don't have it at all. You have to take the garbage, your waste, to a landfill site and dump it yourself.

Mr Stockwell: Like at the cottage.

Mr Tilson: Like at a cottage; exactly. There are others that have roadside pickup and there are others that don't have roadside pickup. There's a whole mess of different alternatives.

Some of the townships have expressed a concern like that, because certainly if the county was to control this area and every municipality said, "Well, county, you're looking after that; we want door-to-door pickup," the problem, as I see it, is that could result in the larger municipalities which are within the county system, in the funding of it, being obliged to pay for that. I don't know whether that's a legitimate concern, but it's a concern that was raised by certainly one of the municipalities in my riding. I'd like to hear more on that. There may be other issues.

I look forward to the committee process and hearing comments such as that. It may well be that the government officials will be able to say, "No, that's not the case," and explain why, but certainly municipalities in my riding that have read this are very nervous about the funding of it, the costing of it, where they are going to get the staff for this, the expertise for this, how they are

going to pay for the unbelievable amount of consultants that'll be required, the reports that are going to be needed to be prepared and these little technical arguments—not little technical arguments, large technical positions that they've expressed a concern with.

Another question was raised by another municipality in my municipality, the town of Orangeville. Contrary to the philosophy of the former Minister of the Environment and of the current Minister of Environment and Energy, they send their garbage to Michigan. So much for getting rid of your waste in your own backyard. They truck it off to Michigan because there's no other place for it.

On the other hand, there's an adjoining municipality, the township of Mono, which has a landfill site. I guess the question that was raised was, notwithstanding any wishes of the township of Mono, if the county council assumes the responsibility of the landfill sites in the county, can the county government then send Orangeville waste, which is now going to Michigan, to the township of Mono? The Ministry of Municipal Affairs says yes. Now there are problems with that. There are problems of costing and planning by one municipality. Here's one municipality that has been planning for a landfill site to last so many years and all of a sudden they're taken back. So I look forward to hearing more in the committee process.

Of interest, the municipal waste group that put forward a press release just recently was concerned about private enterprise and its influence in getting rid of waste. They made comments in a press release as of May 3, this was the OWMA, and they said:

"Our study provides powerful confirmation that the provision of waste management services by the public sector is much more expensive than having those services provided by the private sector. In the case of residential solid waste, our findings indicate that collection by a municipal force can cost at least 75% more than collection by a private contractor."

That is the opinion of Dr Don Dewees, a professor of law and economics at the University of Toronto. I think we need to hear more about that philosophy.

Again, it's rather uncertain about municipalities having to do that, but there need to be some presentations about that. I'd like to hear more about that, as I'm sure all of us would. We should be trying to get rid of our waste in the most economical fashion. On this issue, like a number of other issues, the issues that are raised by the member for Durham West, all of which are good thoughts, we need to hear more of those things. So I look forward to the committee process and to hearing some of those thoughts.

The president of the Ontario Waste Management Association made a comment in the press release that said: "The timing of this study is remarkable. Two

weeks ago, Finance Minister Laughren announced reductions in the amount of money by which Ontario would subsidize the cost of running its municipalities in the future. Then just last Thursday, Environment Minister Wildman introduced regulations that will force most municipalities to provide extensive waste management and recycling programs even if they don't have the financial resources to do so."

I look forward to hearing some response from the government members on that, but that's a fear that's out there. You're saying: "You're not going to get any more money. You're not going to get any more grants. You're not going to get anything, and yet we're going to give you all these responsibilities, and it's your responsibility to do it." So there's a lot of fear out there as to how this is going to be pulled off.

I see I have about two minutes left to comment on AMO's position. AMO, quite rightfully—the member for Essex-Kent referred to a press release, and he didn't say where that was—yes, AMO supports the philosophy of—I'm sorry?

Mr Hayes: April 21.

Mr Tilson: Well, you know, AMO certainly supports the process of waste management that you're suggesting, as do I, as does everyone. The question is, and I'm going to keep hammering away every time someone stands up in this House, how are we going to pay for it? Where's the money going to come from? These are very ambitious programs that you're mandating upon the municipalities to do. Well, yes, grabbing for air, money coming from the sky, who knows? But it's a major problem.

Time is fast fleeting, and I would recommend that members of this House, if you haven't already, get a copy of AMO's response to the papers that were put out. There are very serious concerns that they have on the topic of financial reform and legislative reform. They spent a great deal of time. They list off a great number of recommendations to this government, none of which have been followed in this bill; absolutely none have been followed.

Before you continue to say that AMO supports it—AMO supports the philosophy, but they've raised a number of conditions in these booklets, in these reports, all of which are very extensive.

1750

Then there's the other issue of the larger municipalities and the smaller municipalities. Most of the regional areas, they've got the funds to pull this off. But if you look at your own small municipalities that some of you may represent, particularly in the rural areas, they haven't got the funds for this, whether it's county or whether it's the individual municipalities. They simply don't have the money to pull off what you want.

So I close. On the one hand, I congratulate the

Minister of Environment, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, for at least raising the issue, but they've only brought half of it forward. These issues we need to canvass more, we need to discuss more. More importantly, we need to know the other half, particularly when the Treasurer and the Premier are telling us what a terrible financial state this province is in.

The municipalities are just groaning. The school boards and the hospitals, all of our partners, as we say, are groaning. We're putting these added responsibilities on them that are going to be very onerous indeed. If you don't tell them how to pay for it and if you don't provide financial assistance for it, the program's going to fail.

Mr Wiseman: I want to get back to the costs of this again. There are costs if we don't do it, and some of those costs have to do with the cleanup costs of the environment and the perpetual care costs of the landfill site. I think we need to put those on the table as well when we're talking about costs.

Other costs the municipalities are already experiencing—for example, the cost to ship a tonne of garbage from that town to Michigan must be very high. It may very well be that when the whole region develops a waste management strategy, the costs they are currently experiencing may be less through the development of this waste management strategy.

Just to give you an example to hearken back again, the Durham Board of Education in Durham spends \$90 a tonne now and used to spend \$152 a tonne to dump waste into the Brock West landfill site in Durham. The Toronto school boards didn't have to pay that, so essentially their costs were very low.

What it's going to cost each area could very well be different, depending on what their current costs are, but we also have to remember the economies of scale. If a region can do it, maybe it can do it more efficiently for everybody and people's costs will go down.

But on the other side of the coin, if we don't do it, I think we still have to remember the cost of cleaning up leachate that slides into a river or, for example, the sliding garbage dump that slid into the Brimley Road area back two years ago. It was well over \$1.25 million, I think, to clean that up.

We've got other costs that we have to consider in terms of perpetual care, understanding that not all the costs we're going to pay are in dollars and cents. We have methane gas leaching into the atmosphere that's going to create harm for people.

I think I just ran out of time, but I would like to pursue this.

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I just wanted to comment on the remarks made by my colleague the critic for the third party. I want to reiterate an interesting point he made with respect to the contradictory nature of

this bill, as opposed to what the government has initiated with the Interim Waste Authority process under its authority to come up with landfill sites and the entire process that has been undertaken. It is on the surface of it difficult to understand in what direction this government is going.

It's of course no major surprise, because this government is wont to do that on a number of issues, going in both directions at the same time and not really understanding ultimately where it wants to go. It certainly takes advice from all directions and then never really uses the kind of wise advice that would seemingly put the government in the right direction.

I think the comments that have been made with respect to costing and funding are very much appropriate because this is an industry—if you will, an infant industry—which needs to be supported, which should be of primary importance for this administration. This administration should have as a priority this entire area and it does not seem to be dealing with it as one would have assumed. Going into the last election, there were glowing comments from that side of the House or that party about this entire area.

I'm running out of time, but I would say that, quite frankly, they don't live up to the expectations that many people had of them.

Mr Stockwell: The economies of scale were discussed a moment ago, and the ramifications involved in not pursuing this particular piece of legislation. Let's be very clear. This government has been nothing but hypocritical with respect to the dumping of waste in Ontario. They won't deal with Kirkland Lake and they want to talk about economies of scale.

Let me tell you about where this stuff is being shipped from. Economies of scale? It's from Metro it's being shipped. It doesn't get any bigger than Metro. So economy of scale: Metropolitan Toronto has got to be the largest scale that you're going to have this economy on.

You're going to New York—I'll give you just the states, because the list of the towns and cities is too long. Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Washington, New York: This is where predominantly this stuff is being shipped.

The bottom line that we have here is, the costs involved are going to be so prohibitive it won't matter what the downsides and the upsides are, because the cost is going to be so prohibitive on the local municipalities that the whole program is going to erode. I think the member for Dufferin-Peel was clear about that. It's going to collapse under its own weight.

Now think about it. You're passing on half a billion dollars in costs to municipalities for a social contract. You're going to pass on hundreds of millions of dollars in disentanglement. Under this program, you're going to cost them millions and millions of dollars again. Event-

ually, something has to give. So unless you're prepared to put your money where your mouth is when it comes to waste management, for you to make this legislation come true and force all the cost to the municipalities just means it's lipservice.

You're not prepared to fund what you consider to be a priority. So I don't want to hear any more comments on cost per tonne and the benefits and the downsides. The bottom line is, it will cost more, and unless you're prepared to share the pain of that cost, don't tell me about how important it is.

Mr Hayes: I'd like to thank the member for Dufferin-Peel. I think he made some very good points. There were a couple of issues that he did raise in regard to upper tier versus lower tier and the responsibilities and who was going to pay. I have indicated just two days ago that we'll certainly be willing to look at amending that particular section about what type of vote would be taken and things of that nature.

But I think one question that was asked was, why the rush? Municipalities, environmental groups, corporations and all levels of government have come to the conclusion that we cannot continue the old way of just looking for more landfill sites, places to dump garbage or places to transport garbage, and just dump it on to someone else. We have to get away from that old way.

The bottom line in this piece of legislation, the real key, is in reducing waste. I think that's very, very important. It will take away the need for all these landfills that we're talking about and all the landfills that we're having problems with.

As far as the cost, rightfully so—I think that is a very good question—we say, can we afford it? I must say to the member for Dufferin-Peel and all the other members in this House, can we afford not to do this? I think it's very, very important.

There was another area here also, talking about the concern of the private sector. This bill does not take away anything from the private sector, and it still allows municipalities, if they so choose, to contract out.

I'd just like to thank all those who did speak on this bill, and I hope we do have your support in committee. I'm sure it will be a very worthwhile bill to support.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Dufferin-Peel has two minutes to respond.

Mr Tilson: Members from Durham West, Eglinton, Etobicoke West and Essex-Kent all have raised excellent points, and I think as we watch this debate unfold, it's almost a non-partisan problem that we need to look at. Certainly I know our party will be trying to cooperate as much as we can with the government in trying to assist it and perhaps offer advice on changes that they are recommending. I do look forward to the committee process.

I think we're all tempted to raise little problems that

we have in our own ridings when we stand to speak, and I'm at fault in that. One of the concerns I have that has developed in our riding—the member for Durham West keeps talking about the problem with tires—notwithstanding that fact, we had the tire tax that was instituted by this government, and the NDP government continues to allow that \$5 per tire simply to be pulled into the consolidated revenue fund. I don't know where you're putting it. You should be dealing with that whole issue of tires.

We've got a major problem in our riding, specifically in the town of Orangeville. There's litigation going on and it would be inappropriate to deal with that now. The fact of the matter is that there is a whole slew of tires that are stored there as a result of a recycling company that had major problems.

The government of course has said, "We're going to have to have security about that, you know," notwithstanding the fact that it would be cheaper to move them. Now they've taken the security away, and we in Orangeville are very afraid that the horrible incident that occurred with the Liberal government in Hagersville, that that doesn't occur again.

We've got all of these problems that developed, whether they be in tires or other areas, and again it gets back to the issue, who pays? The municipalities can't.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable minister wishes to make a statement.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): Mr Speaker, pursuant to standing order 55, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, May 10, we will continue second reading consideration of municipal waste management, Bill 7, and, if time permits, we will begin second reading consideration of Bill 32, the Retail Sales Tax Act amendments, and Bill 34, the Highway Traffic Act amendments which, by agreement with the opposition parties, will be considered concurrently.

On Tuesday, May 11, we will continue second reading consideration of the vehicle transfer package, Bills 32 and 34.

On Wednesday, May 12, we will give third reading consideration to Bill 102, the Pay Equity Act.

In the morning of Thursday, May 13, during the time reserved for private members' public business, we will consider ballot item 7, a resolution standing in the name of Mr Huget, and ballot item 8, a resolution standing in the name of Mr Grandmaître.

On Thursday afternoon, we will debate an opposition day motion standing in the name of Mrs McLeod.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): It now being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until next Monday at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1803.

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No. 16



N° 16

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 10 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 10 mai 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrite dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Monday 10 May 1993

The House met at 1331.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ASSISTANCE TO THIRD WORLD

Mr D. James Henderson (Etobicoke-Humber): I hope members will share my view that sound projects of Third World technical, fiscal and medical assistance are not only acts of altruism. Of course, if they are well conceived and do not attempt to force First World attitudes and lifestyle preferences on Third World peoples, they benefit the receiving country directly.

But it is also true that by contributing to fiscal soundness and a better standard of life for all the peoples of the world we build healthier and safer international communities and a more vibrant world economy. That, of course, benefits Canadians as well, as present and future trading partners of Third World developing nations. Our generosity therefore serves a selfish purpose as well.

I'm rising, therefore, to thank several Canadian companies for their generous donations to Third World assistance and to applaud their generosity and foresight. The organizations concerned are Apotex Pharmaceuticals, Canadian Medicine Aid Programme, Genpharm Ltd, Ingram and Bell Inc, Novopharm Ltd, Pharmascience Inc, Speedy Optical Ltd and Taro Pharmaceuticals. Two other companies wished to remain anonymous.

To these Canadian companies for their humanitarian service and outstanding generosity, our sincere appreciation.

MARLAND YOUTH COUNCIL

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): Today I rise in the House to welcome the members of the Marland Youth Council to Queen's Park.

The Marland Youth Council was formed in November 1992. This non-partisan council is comprised of student representatives from all seven high schools in my riding of Mississauga South. These students have an excellent understanding of the legislative process and are well informed about current issues. The council meets once a month to discuss provincial legislation or policy changes, and council members take time between meetings to discuss these issues with their school peers. Consequently, the Marland Youth Council has been of great assistance to me in representing the concerns and interests of young people in my community.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to all the members of the council, who have been so forthright in their discussions with me. Their insightful comments and advice on a variety of topics, including graduated licensing, destreaming and standard-

ized testing, have been very helpful and thought-provoking.

I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in welcoming the following members of the Marland Youth Council who are here today: Kelly DeLuca, Tom Grzesiak, John Lam, Chris Leikermoser, Tania D'Avanzo, Rima Ramchandani, Matt Lenner, Lisa Smylie, Mellissa Taddeo, Jarrod Overy, Shannon Pountney and Matthias Kredler.

NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I am pleased to stand today to extend a special welcome to the National Ballet of Canada's concert group for its upcoming performance in my riding of Oxford.

As we know, the National Ballet of Canada has contributed greatly to our national culture. It has strengthened and promoted the development of Canadian culture through performances in various parts of the country and encouraged the growth of Ontario's cultural industries.

This performance also illustrates a strong sense of cooperation among sponsors from the private sector, a national performing arts group—the National Ballet of Canada—and the citizens of Norwich, particularly the local husband-and-wife organizing team of Cameron Smillie and Carolyn Clark. The first ballet presentation has generated a great deal of enthusiasm within the community.

This represents a significant opportunity for the citizens of a rural municipality like Norwich to enhance its cultural experience. For many of them, it will be their first opportunity to attend such an event. In fact, all 1,300 tickets for the May 20 performance at the Norwich Community Centre have been sold already.

For the National Ballet of Canada, Norwich, with a population of 2,200, will rank as the smallest community the company has ever performed in. The ballet's exhibition also includes an educational element for the local high school and grade 7.

In closing, I want to again congratulate the local organizers, Cameron Smillie and Carolyn Clark, as well as the National Ballet of Canada for bringing this cultural and educational experience to rural Ontario. I believe that this occasion will set a precedent for other cultural events in rural communities.

SUPPORT AND CUSTODY ORDERS ENFORCEMENT

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): One year ago, the NDP government replaced the Liberal support and custody orders enforcement program with the family support plan, which mandated automatic wage deductions for parents with child support obligations.

When the family support plan was developed, the

Liberal caucus supported it, but we argued that the 25% of fathers who don't default on child support should be exempted from the automatic wage deduction program. But the NDP insisted on making everything mandatory for every parent with a support order, including all the fathers who voluntarily complied, so now we have an overloaded system with insufficient resources. Ironically, look at the NDP's recent restraint plan, and guess what? The family support plan will have its resources cut.

To add insult to injury, at the very same time as the NDP is slashing family support plan resources, it is wasting \$500,000 on an expensive, sophisticated television campaign and a glossy coloured poster campaign which tells fathers to honour their support payments. Can you believe it? First the NDP makes wage deductions mandatory by law, which is a good thing, but then it squanders half a million dollars telling fathers to do what the law requires them to do anyway.

It is typical of this government to squander money on unnecessary self-congratulatory advertising instead of spending the money where it really counts: on the children on this province.

1340

ADOPTION

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): Earlier today a press conference—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. Would you stop the clock, please. The member for Durham East, please come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I ask the member for Durham East to please come to order. Would you restart the clock, and I recognize the member for Burlington South.

Mr Jackson: Earlier today a press conference and a rally were held at Queen's Park by the Adoption Reform Coalition concerning the current review of the adoption disclosure program by the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Since 1978, a voluntary disclosure system has been in place which permits limited access to adoption information. To match adoptees with birth parents, a mutual registration and match must take place. If there is a match through the register and both parties consent, identifying information can be exchanged and reunions may be arranged after the parties have received mandatory counselling.

In 1987 an amendment to the Child and Family Services Act created a new disclosure and search procedure managed by the Community and Social Services ministry, which makes it easier to access adoption information. However, government bureaucracy has held up the flow of adoption information, resulting in waiting lists for as many as 8,000 adoptees

facing a five- to eight-year wait before a search for their biological parents may be completed.

Today the search for one's roots and background is recognized as a crucial component to help us in discovering and affirming our personal identities. An inseparable part of this is the knowledge of one's biological, genetic roots by adoptees who choose to try to discover this hidden side of their earlier lives.

I call on the NDP government to respond to the sincere request made today by the Adoption Reform Coalition and assist Ontario adoptees in helping those who so wish to open the closed doors of their past and allow them to get on with their lives with truth and with dignity.

BREAST-FEEDING

Mr Robert Frankford (Scarborough East): May is the month in which the World Health Assembly, the governing body of the World Health Organization, meets in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1981 it approved a code of marketing of breast milk substitutes in recognition of the importance of breast-feeding for maternal and child health.

There is probably nothing that would make as significant an impact on the promotion of health as breast-feeding. Studies show again and again the advantages for morbidity and mortality. Cost savings can be substantial in both developing and industrial countries like ours. I would like to point out to the Legislature that the code of marketing was supported and voted for by the federal government of the day.

A few weeks ago there was a debate in the federal Parliament on a resolution by Jim Karpoff, an NDP member from British Columbia, on the need to implement the WHO code. It was gratifying to note the constructive speeches by the NDP and Liberal members but disappointing in the extreme that the Conservatives, after all these years, cannot bring themselves to take a small but essential measure for the health of the children of Canada.

I've heard a lot of concern about an agreement that Women's College Hospital recently made with a formula company. I have here a clipping from the Vancouver Sun: "BC Hospitals Urged to Drop Formula Deals." I hope that the Ontario Ministry of Health and its counterparts will get together to pressure against this unacceptable lack of action by the federal government.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I want to illustrate the hypocrisy of Bob Rae's government, a government that claims to protect the interests of working persons in this province.

We learned earlier this year of the government's intention to spend \$180 million for a 30-storey office building to house new Workers' Compensation Board headquarters at a time when 20% of Toronto's office

space is vacant. The initial observation of the plans to build new WCB headquarters echo the NDP's prevalent theme of fiscal irresponsibility and mismanagement of taxpayers' dollars. But it goes further than that.

While the government may have an extra \$180 million kicking around for the construction of more office space in downtown Toronto, it cannot find the money to assist those injured workers who have suffered injuries in the workplace prior to 1974. Prior to that time, WCB pensions were not indexed, which means that those who were injured on the job have experienced real losses in the purchasing power of their pensions. Although legislation indexed WCB pensions in 1985, it was not retroactive. As a result, the pensions of older injured workers continue to fall far from their value when initially compensated.

Meanwhile, Bob Rae is building more office space in downtown Toronto, forgetting about the older injured workers in our province. It is clear where Mr Rae's priorities lie; and unfortunately, they are not with promoting fairness for the injured workers of this province.

HIGHWAY ACCIDENT

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I'd ask the members of this Legislature to join with me in remembering the eight youths tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident on the Forks of the Credit road in the town of Caledon this past weekend. I don't think anyone can understand what the families of these young people are going through as they try to deal with losing their child or brother or sister or friend in such a tragic accident.

As parents, we should never have to outlive our children. As a parent, this is something you can never be prepared for. I cannot express to you the emotions that I experienced on Sunday morning when I heard about the accident and the feeling of helplessness that goes through you as you realize you can't do anything at that particular moment. All we can do right now is to pray for the young people who have survived and are right now fighting for their lives in the hospital, and for the families of the eight youths taken from us far too soon.

On behalf of the members of this House, I would personally like to offer my condolences to all of the families and friends of the young people involved. The communities of Caledon and Brampton will be hit very hard by this accident, and I am sure that everyone will offer any assistance they can to the families, friends and relatives of the eight young people killed.

When you grow up in a community that is small and primarily rural, you learn at a very early age how important community life is. It will be that same strength of community that will help the people of Caledon and Brampton through this tragedy.

POLICE WEEK

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): The week of May 9 to 15 is Police Week across Canada. This year marks the 23rd annual Police Week and I ask the House to join me in expressing our appreciation to police for their outstanding service to Ontario.

Police Week is an opportunity for everyone in this province to recognize the professionalism and integrity of our police officers. Ontario's police officers are among the finest in the world. The service they provide has remained of the highest standard, despite the demands our society places on them.

During Police Week, the 115 municipal police services and 182 OPP detachments in Ontario will be holding special events to showcase their community policing initiatives. I encourage all members of this House and members of the public to participate in these events. Make the effort to visit your local police service. Get to know your police officers in a positive and informal setting.

In conclusion, I call on all the members of this House to recognize and applaud the achievements of all police services in Ontario and across Canada as we celebrate Police Week. The men and women in blue who put their lives on the line for us on a daily basis deserve our fullest praise and gratitude.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Mr Charles Beer (York North): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I see on the list that was given to us in terms of those absent from the House that the Minister without Portfolio in Education and Training, the member for Port Arthur, ought to have been here in her place. As the Speaker may be aware, the Minister of Education and Training at noon today in Windsor and the Minister of Housing this morning in Ottawa both made important announcements about government policy that should have been announced in this House and, I would have thought, with this Minister without Portfolio system, could well have been done by that minister here.

It is an important statement that was made in both Windsor and in Ottawa-Carleton. We have to remember that this House has a function, Mr Speaker, and I would like to know why they are not in the House today—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member take his seat, please. The member will know that he does not have a point of order. He will also know that I do encourage all ministers to make statements of important matters here in the House, for this is the seat of government.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Treasurer and Deputy Premier. The Finance minister, our Treasurer, keeps saying that the

Ontario economy is recovering, take heart, that people of this province are getting back to work. We all saw on Friday that according to the Statistics Canada figures, 24,000 more Ontarians were unemployed in April than in March and that the number of people employed dropped by 13,000 last month. Ontario's unemployment rate for the first three months of 1993 averaged 11%, the same as for the first months of 1992.

I ask the minister, in light of these unemployment figures, who is right about Ontario's recovery, you or Statistics Canada? Or has increasing unemployment become the government's new definition of economic recovery?

1350

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): Perhaps the leader of the official opposition would put it in a bit of perspective. We've had, I believe, seven straight months of employment gains in Ontario, and year over year, the employment is up almost 100,000—96,000, I think, to be exact—from a year ago now.

I realize that the role of opposition is put a negative spin on numbers and on events, but I think to be fair—I do understand that very well—I would ask her to put it in perspective. Also, it's not just Ontario that had a drop in employment in April. She's quite right, there was a drop in employment in April, but that was a national figure as well. The employment dropped all across the country. So just to put it in perspective, not to dismiss the seriousness of an employment drop when we're into a recovery that we all recognize as being somewhat fragile, I do hope that the leader of the official opposition would appreciate the fact that there's been positive employment growth for the last year now and that we hope that what we saw in April was more of a blip on the scope than a new trend.

Mrs McLeod: It seems to me that the Treasurer is defending the indefensible, and it truly concerns me that, as you are about to bring out a budget in a week's time, you are still talking about hope, because that's exactly what those 13,000 more Ontarians out of work last month would like to have. They would like to have some hope. They would like to have more than a wish and a prayer from this government to say that there are going to be jobs for them in the future.

Treasurer, I am using the statistics that are seasonally adjusted, which, they tell me, are a real reflection of the numbers of people that are out there without jobs trying to find jobs. I would suggest to you that there is no reason for Ontario's economy not to be strong. We have tremendous strengths to build on, and the reason this economy is not recovering as it should is because of your government's policies. I am concerned that you still don't get it, and that a week before you bring in a budget you are still talking about new taxes that are going to kill even more jobs.

Minister, we have given a number of alternatives to tax hikes. We ask you: Now that you see that the economic recovery is not strong, that we have more and more people out of work, will you not go back and take a hard look at the proposal for new taxes that will put more people out of work? Will you not bring in a budget with no new taxes?

Hon Mr Laughren: I want to make sure I understand the position of the official opposition. I want to be perfectly clear, because I don't want to put words in the mouth of the leader of the official opposition.

I think it's now clear that the Liberal opposition doesn't want us to proceed with the expenditure reductions that we've announced.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): No, that's not the case.

Hon Mr Laughren: Oh, I'm wrong on that? Am I right that the leader of the official opposition does not want us to proceed with the \$2 billion in savings that we're trying to negotiate at the social contract table? That's number two. And number three, she's now saying that we should not have any tax increases whatsoever in the budget.

Therefore, it seems to me that what the leader of the official opposition is saying to us is: "We know that there are problems in this province, but don't worry about the debt or the deficit. Let it rip." Well, this government is not prepared to do that.

Mrs McLeod: Mr Speaker, as a point of order before I proceed with my question: If, in response to the Treasurer's answer, I answer his questions, will you allow me that time as well as the time to pursue my role, which is to ask questions of the Treasurer?

Hon Mr Laughren: I wish.

Mrs McLeod: Treasurer, we are asking questions day after day which attempt to get on the table what your government's plans are, and we are more than ready to respond to them and we are more than ready to talk about alternatives.

Today, I want to talk about people who are out of work, more people who are out of work this month than were out of work last month. I want to talk to you about the fact that people need the jobs that businesses will create, and the fact that businesses are leaving this province because it doesn't make sense to do business here anymore. I want you to understand, Treasurer, that plant closures and the job losses are continuing.

Let me give you just three recent examples: Mack Trucks announced that it's going to close its Toronto plant; Dofasco saying it's going to set its new mini-mill up in Kentucky rather than in Ontario; Toronto's Norbord Industries saying it's going to open a new plant in the United States.

My question today relates very directly to the fact that jobs and investment are being lost to Ontario

because of your anti-business policies, from labour legislation to out-of-control WCB premiums to the new tax hikes you propose. I am talking about your budget, Treasurer, when I say to you, will you make it a priority in your budget to ensure that the steps are taken to put a sound economic recovery plan in place? Will you be prepared to examine every provision of your budget and simply ask the question whether or not this will help or hurt the private sector to create the jobs we need?

Hon Mr Laughren: It would be strange not to have that as automatically part of the process when drafting a budget. I don't mean to dismiss the problem of a drop in employment in the province. That's not a happy event, and I wish it was otherwise, but I would remind the leader of the official opposition that we have had economic growth and employment growth in the last year, and I don't think anybody in this province really blames this government for the recession—other than those people with a rather narrow, partisan view of the world. I don't mean to get into a series of finger-pointing, but there's lots of evidence that federal government policies over the last five years, everything from the free trade agreement to the GST, did a lot more damage to the Ontario economy than this government would ever, ever be able to do even if we wanted to, and of course that would be ridiculous.

If I might just quote briefly from a letter to the editor from the Wellington area, someone said in a letter to the editor:

"Last night you found fault with the NDP government of Bob Rae without once mentioning the mess the Liberal Party left behind or the problems created by the Conservatives before the Liberals formed the government. You were critical, destructive and negative. Not once did there appear to be any Liberal policy that had any substance, shape or direction."

When is the leader of the official opposition going to come forward with one positive suggestion or alternative? When?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question.

Mrs McLeod: Right off the top, scrap the Interim Waste Authority, one alternative among a number we keep offering a Treasurer who simply doesn't want to hear the alternatives because this government has made up its mind.

Mrs McLeod: Treasurer, while my second question will be directed to the Minister of Health, I want to say as a direct preamble to that question that we do indeed support the need for restraint, that we do understand that there are very difficult decisions to be made, as we understand how things have to be done differently in this province, but we are seeing more and more effects of what we truly believe to be a last-minute and very poorly-thought-out expenditure control plan presented by this government. It seems to me that if the govern-

ment had started to deal earlier with the need for cuts, it might have been able to explain to all of us, and particularly to the people affected by the cuts, how and why it made those decisions.

HEALTH SERVICES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I ask the Minister of Health: It seems that there suddenly appears to be a whole new plan to deal with what has been a very long-standing problem about the distribution of physician services in underserved areas of this province. Minister, can you explain to us today why none of the five regions suggested by ministry officials as underserved for the purposes of your plan happens to be in northern Ontario?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm glad to clarify that. The regions that were defined as underserved in the background material that I know the Leader of the Opposition is referring to was on a county basis. I don't think I need to tell anyone in this House that there are towns all across northern Ontario and in fact in other parts of rural Ontario that need doctors, and I can point to members on all sides who have identified that problem. There are indeed a large number of areas of northern Ontario that need family physicians, that need some specialists and that have recognized that the underserved areas program that has been in place for the last 20 years has not proved particularly effective in meeting those needs. What we are trying to do is to make sure that we have in fact the right professionals in the right place.

1400

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Supplementary.

Mrs McLeod: Mr Speaker, I confess I'm perplexed to know exactly how to frame a supplementary when the answer is completely incomprehensible to me. I'm asking why areas identified as underserved—the minister acknowledges there's a need to deal with the problem of medical services in underserved areas, but none of them is in the north. Talking about counties doesn't answer the question; there are no counties in the north. The question is what's happening in northern Ontario under this new and, we believe, very poorly thought out plan.

I know this is not an issue that's new to the minister because while in opposition the members of the NDP caucus toured the north, and with a great deal of fanfare produced a report called Operation Critical demanding that the Liberal government immediately address the problem of a lack of adequate numbers of physicians in northern Ontario, and now it seems the whole problem has just disappeared.

Interjection: Did you?

Mrs McLeod: The previous Liberal government, in answer to the question from the NDP caucus, did address the problem. We established a program called

the northern family practice residency program. It was designed to encourage physicians to complete their training in the north so that they would stay in practice there.

Minister, I met with the graduating members of the first class of that program on Friday and I can tell you that they feel completely and absolutely betrayed. I ask what you say to the 1993 graduating class of the northern family practice residency program who have taken specialized training so that they could stay and provide medical service in communities of northern Ontario and who are now finding out that, thanks to this ill-conceived plan, they are not going to be able to do that.

Hon Mrs Grier: First of all, let me be very clear to the Leader of the Opposition that there are areas of northern Ontario that need physicians. The purpose in putting forward the proposals that we have put before the Ontario Medical Association is to negotiate with the Ontario Medical Association a formula, a way in which we can in fact meet those needs.

Secondly, there are many opportunities for new, young physicians, whom I would agree with the Leader of the Opposition we need to encourage into our system, on other than a fee-for-service basis. There are community health centres, there are HSOs, there are public health units which are anxious to have doctors. Some of them are in the north; some of them are in the south. But if we are to manage the health care system in a way that it has not been managed in this province in the past, then we, as other provinces have begun to do, have got to find a way in which we can ensure that we manage the deployment of those professionals so that we have the doctors where we need them to serve the people who need them.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): Madam Minister, I'd also like to ask you in that regard, because I think Metropolitan Toronto is going to be an underserved area, specifically with respect to AIDS and HIV patients. As you know, I've had a call from an intern, Jonathan Luetkehoelter, who is living in my riding and intended to practise in the city of Toronto to provide care to HIV-positive and AIDS patients, and he's reconsidering that because of your plan.

As you know, the patient lists of more than half of the primary care providers to these people who are HIV-positive and have AIDS are closed and there are not enough new people going in. This plan is going to hurt those people. In the interim, people who are HIV-positive and have AIDS are dying.

I'm asking you what you're going to do to encourage those people to continue practising and make an exemption for HIV-positive and AIDS patients so that we continue to provide doctors' care for them in my riding and in the city of Toronto.

Hon Mrs Grier: Let me say to the honourable member that the fact that there is such a desperate shortage of physicians to treat people with AIDS proves the point that our current system isn't working.

I would agree with him. We have to find a way to encourage physicians to meet the needs of people who have very specific and specialized needs. The system that we are putting in place and the discussions that we have had with the AIDS bureau is designed to try and make sure that there are primary care physicians to deal with people who are HIV-infected. That is why the development of some kind of community health centre, some kind of centre where those doctors can be on salary and can be specialized and can meet those needs has been under active discussion for quite some time and is entirely consistent with the proposals that we have put before the Ontario Medical Association.

I share his concern and I want to make sure that his concern is addressed.

LABOUR RELATIONS

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): My question is for the Minister of Finance and it has to do with the public service's proposal that was tabled last Friday. Certainly, parts of this proposal are totally unacceptable, but other parts that have to do with some of the expenditures that could take place within the whole public spending of the province of Ontario have a great deal of merit. Yet the issue still goes back one step further, and that is that public servants who are going to raise issues of importance that could allow us to find areas we could cut back on would be reluctant to do so, and in fact would hold back their suggestions, for fear of personal reprisals.

If you go back to your own throne speech just after you were elected, you and your government had proposals that would affect this whistle-blowing thing. On page 3 of your throne speech, you said, "We will introduce 'whistle-blowing' guidelines to protect public employees." With that kind of guideline you talked about over two years ago, the fear of recrimination disappears, the reluctance people have is lessened, and people will come forward with suggestions on how to fight this problem of spending and expenditure in the province of Ontario.

The fact is that whistle-blowing doesn't cost us anything. It could save you a great deal of money. Why is it that two and a half years later, you have not brought in your whistle-blowing legislation, that you still haven't kept that promise?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I do not disagree with some of the comments the member has made. Obviously, we will be proceeding with the so-called whistle-blower legislation at the appropriate time; there's no reason not to.

I just want to offer assurances to the member and to

other people, people in the public sector, that there would not be reprisals for people who came forward with suggestions. As a matter of fact, we look forward to receiving them. We said over and over again that if people have suggestions for ways in which we can deliver services more efficiently, we would be foolish indeed to ignore them. So we encourage that to happen, and I would just offer the member assurances that we'll do everything we can to make sure there are no reprisals against people who do so.

Mr Cousens: Two years ago you were prepared to bring legislation forward and you should still do it, because it's one way of building the trust which is disappearing very rapidly between yourselves and the unions. It would at least give them some sense that what you say is what you mean.

The unions believe that any kind of dollars you're going to find, if they're going to come from any place, they'll have to be from tax hikes or they'll have to come from expenditure cuts, but they're not going to come out of the public payroll; in other words, that you're going to have to find some other place for the money than in the social contract.

The unions obviously believe you are willing to negotiate \$2 billion in payroll cuts, and they've come back with suggestions on how the government can save \$2 billion. What I want to know is the option that you're going to follow. Inasmuch as you're going to come up with some savings, are you going to (1) do as the unions hope and cut less from the payroll so you won't have that much into the social contract, or (2) could you just put the money into reducing the deficit, or (3) could you back off on your ludicrous proposal to have tax increases?

Are you in a position where you could come now and say that if you are able to find the \$2 billion or a large sum close to it—we've seen \$1.7 billion proposed by the unions in both government waste and health fraud and other areas where there are significant savings.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Cousens: Those savings: Could you apply them to some other area than to just the deficit but to not cause tax increases?

Hon Mr Laughren: We tried to be as clear as possible when the social contract talks began, and that was that we were going to achieve and had already made decisions on approximately \$4 billion in expenditure reductions, that there were going to be revenue increases, tax increases in the budget on the 19th, but that there was a requirement for another \$2 billion at the social contract table to come out of public sector compensation one way or another, so anything that goes beyond the \$2 billion that's been targeted at the social contract table could be applied to whatever out there to effect savings or to reduce expenditures.

But I want to make it perfectly clear that we would much rather achieve \$2 billion and will insist upon achieving \$2 billion at the social contract table, rather than a further \$2 billion in expenditure reductions all across the province, which would cause enormous job losses in the public sector. That's the purpose of the social contract: to protect jobs and services in every community all across the province. That's the very purpose of the social contract talks.

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Mr Cousens: I'm aware that's the purpose; I'm just afraid of what you and your government are going to do. The bottom line here is that the unions are still not willing to talk payroll cuts. They obviously haven't got your message of public sector restraint. Since I assume you intend to follow up on the \$1 billion in reduction in waste and the \$700-million saving in health care fraud that the unions have already identified and our leader has identified, that gives you at least \$1.7 billion in money saved. Will you state categorically today that any savings, such as this \$1.7 billion from waste and health care fraud, will be used to wipe out the tax hike in your forthcoming budget?

Hon Mr Laughren: First of all, we appreciated very much receiving the information back from the public sector last Friday. We are looking at and will continue to look at all of those proposed savings. Some of the numbers I might quarrel with, as to whether or not those kinds of savings can be achieved and so forth. In many of them, it's going to take a considerable length of time to achieve the savings that are mentioned in their proposals. But that doesn't mean they're not good proposals and not ones that are worth considering.

But to answer your question directly, no, we will be proceeding with tax increases in the budget because we believe that the balanced approach of expenditure reductions, social contract savings and tax increases is the fairest way, so that everybody in this province is making a contribution to the solution.

INMATE SECURITY

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): My question is for the Chair of the Management Board. Officials in the Management Board secretariat are aware of potentially dangerous problems with security hardware at the Mimico Detention Centre, the Stratford provincial jail, the provincial courts in Oshawa and Etobicoke, and the OPP buildings in Downsview and Peterborough.

For instance, in the new addition to Mimico, vertical cell bars were installed with soft rather than tool-resisting steel. The bars have been replaced with tool-resisting steel, but they are still the wrong shape. The new bars are round rather than the double-ribbed that are required for security purposes in the project specifications.

That's not all. The locks on the cells can be unlocked without causing the signal light to go on. Some of the locks have been modified since leaving the factory so they no longer contain a full complement of lock tumblers. This means that some keys may unlock doors they shouldn't and it's even possible that some locks can be unlocked without keys.

My question, Minister, is, how and why did these serious security defects occur and what is your ministry doing to correct them?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): The defects which the member refers to were detected by staff of my ministry and the Ministry of Correctional Services. Actions are being taken with the contractor responsible. They will all be replaced at the cost of the contractor, not of the public purse. We're proceeding to investigate other installations.

Mrs Marland: On March 18, Global Television interviewed government officials about the situation in Mimico. The Global reporter Robin Smythe was shown the modifications that were being made to the cell bars, but there was no mention of problems with the cell locks. However, I have carefully reviewed a videotape of that news story with a corrections hardware expert. We have been able to discern that the government was aware of the lock problems at that time.

In the video, the new lock boxes are unpainted rather than painted steel and there are other parts that have also been changed. As well, the reporter ended her story stating that inspections of other new government buildings, where the same subcontractor was used, showed that the grill bars do meet government security standards. However, this contradicts information I now have, which is that soft grill bars were installed at the Stratford provincial jail, the provincial courts in Oshawa and Etobicoke and the OPP detachments in Peterborough and Downsview. Minister, it appears that your ministry is trying to cover up a potentially serious security risk. Will you immediately begin an investigation to get to the bottom of this?

Hon Mr Charlton: I guess, to be as brief as is possible to a question like this, the investigation is long since under way.

Mrs Marland: Looking again at Mimico, this building was supposed to be ready in December 1992. The government hired 24 people who are now collecting idle-time salaries while they wait for these security deficiencies to be corrected. The minister should also be aware that clause 816 of the project specifications required that an independent hardware consultant unrelated to the hardware manufacturer and supplier be hired by the contractor. But in the Mimico case the independent hardware consultant was also the project manager for the hardware supplier. Obviously, the Management Board secretariat is not being vigilant in

ensuring that contractors follow the government's own specifications for its projects.

Minister, how did this conflict of interest occur, what are you doing to ensure that a similar situation doesn't occur again, and can you assure this House that when people are asked in a public interview on television they in fact tell the truth?

Hon Mr Charlton: The member of the third party takes a very smug approach in the way that she asks her question. Let me just suggest to you two things in response to her question: firstly, that my ministry and the ministry of corrections have been on top of this matter—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Charlton: The ministry of corrections and my ministry have been on top of this problem for some time now. There has been an extensive investigation pursued by the two ministries. One of the reasons why the member has had leaks of information is because of the extensive investigation which we've conducted. That matter is now in the hands of the Ontario Provincial Police.

RECREATIONAL LICENCES

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): I wonder if the Treasurer could help me out. Treasurer, we all know that you are trying frantically to raise new revenues and I'm just wondering how far you will go in your desperation. I have it on pretty good authority that you and the Minister of Transportation are seriously considering a \$10 to \$20 licence fee on every bicycle in this province and also the same kind of \$10 to \$20 fee on every canoe in this province.

Interjection: Canoe?

Mr Daigeler: On every canoe.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Daigeler: Mr Treasurer, I wonder whether you could put my mind at ease about these new taxes on bicycles and canoes or, if you can't, whether you at least could assure me that you won't bring in taxes on roller-skates and tolls on sidewalks.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I do appreciate the fact that more of the member for Nepean's constituents get to work by canoe and bicycle than mine do. But I wanted to assure the member that any new revenue moves that we take, whether it's on the tax side or what we call non-tax revenues, will be sensitive to the needs of everybody in the province.

Mr Daigeler: Frankly, Mr Treasurer, I don't find that very reassuring at all. In fact, I find it about as reassuring as your answer when I asked you about the elimination of OSAP grants, because when I asked you about that, you sloughed off the question, and guess

what? Six months later you cut out the OSAP grants. So Treasurer, what assurance, what guarantee, can you give me that you will not tax bicycles and canoes in this province?

Hon Mr Laughren: I've forgotten my answer to the question on OSAP, but I wanted to tell you that the assurance I can give you that there will not be licences on bicycles and canoes is my word.

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POLICE SERVICES

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Last Wednesday I asked you if you had any idea of what the additional policing for the Windsor casino is going to cost the province and you said that you did not. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't want to misquote you, so your quote is, "We don't have any projection at this point of the total amount that will be." That is the quote.

I'd also like to read you a quote from the Windsor chief of police. When asked "Have you projected the annual cost of policing and securing the casino project once it is up and running," his answer was, "Yes, I have, and of course, that is part of the report I've just referred to." How do you explain this discrepancy in this report you've had in your possession since January?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): I don't have that report which he is referring to. That, I understand, is a report that was completed by the Windsor Police Force and given to the police services board as a recommendation. But that report was completed before the casino site was chosen.

Mr Eves: I don't know what the specific casino site has to do with the fact that the ministry indeed does have the report and has had it in its possession since January. A spokesperson for the Windsor Police Services Board has told us that your ministry did not want this report released before June 30 of this year. In fact, he's further told us that until the Windsor police did their study, the province had done no study of its own as to what this additional police force would cost in connection with the casino, and I understand that your ministry has now hired a consultant to do research so it can review the conclusions and the findings of the Windsor Police Services Board study.

Why are you (a) not permitting that report to be released, and why are your ministry people telling them that, and (b) trying to reinvent the wheel and spending more taxpayers' money to challenge a report that's already been done by the Windsor Police Services Board? Why are you doing this stuff?

Hon Ms Churley: As I said, my understanding of that report was that it was an internal police document that was prepared very early on in the process. In the

meantime we have been working with the Windsor police and the OPP together and commissioned a study to come up with reasonable calculations on what kind of extra police are needed for this project. We've come up, in the meantime, with the number of "10" to deal with the opening of the interim casino, but we will be continuing to work with the police and the study to come up with a reasonable number.

GASOLINE HANDLING

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): My question is also to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Is this on dumps?

Mr Wiseman: No, Mr Bradley, it's not on dumps; it's on something that you failed to recognize when you were the Minister of the Environment. It has to do with leaking gas tanks. I raised this issue a few months ago in the Legislature, on these commercial gas tanks that are in the ground holding gasoline and tend to leak. I can see now across the province that gas tanks are being replaced.

At that time the response I received was that regulations were pending. I would like to know at this time where in the stage of process we are in terms of heading towards having regulations around in-ground gas storage tanks.

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): As a member I'm very concerned about the serious environmental problems which can be caused by leaking underground storage tanks, concerned about it because they can cause explosions and fires and can and do contaminate underground water.

The regulations I'm proposing are designed to prevent such incidents by requiring certain upgradings of facilities. We are taking into account the impact of the proposed regulations on all sectors of the industry. Obviously, there would be costs associated with that. The bulk of that consultation has been done and I intend to expedite the decision on this matter as soon as the consultation process has been confirmed.

Mr Wiseman: My question is prompted by the hard reality that even the smallest leak from these tanks can contaminate a wide area, and that will create huge environmental problems and environmental messes.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I'm with you on this one, Wiseman.

Mr Wiseman: I'm glad to hear that.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Wiseman: I'm just a little nervous now, though.

The Speaker: Will the member place his question, please.

Mr Wiseman: My supplementary has to do with:

Do we have any indication of the costs related to the cleanup of these messes? What does it cost the ministry to do this? How long? Can you give me some update on that kind of information?

Hon Ms Churley: The average cost of a cleanup is an alarming \$200,000, and sometimes it can go into the millions. Large expenditures on cleanups amount, of course, to an economic strain on the taxpayers of Ontario and they create often unnecessary expenses for business. These are very, very high costs if a leak does happen.

By adopting the proposed regulations, we will be doing our best to protect the environment in this case and at the same time preventing these large expenditures on cleanups. So just to reiterate what I said in the first question, we are hoping to move very quickly at the end of the consultations and move forward with these new regulations.

CLEANUP OF INDUSTRIAL SITE

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): My question is to the Minister of Environment and Energy and it is on the issue of cleanups. Last month, as part of the minister's finances expenditure cutbacks, your government announced that it would be delaying the cleanup and restoration of various pollution sites throughout the province. We have now been informed that one project that will be delayed due to this announcement is the cleanup of PCBs located in and around the town of Smithville. According to our information, the cleanup on this site was to be started this summer, but has now been delayed indefinitely.

Minister, this is a very important environmental issue to the residents of Smithville and the Niagara Peninsula which demands your full attention. On what basis have you justified the delay in the restoration of this PCB-contaminated site?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): I appreciate the member's interest, and I'll take the matter as notice and report back to the House.

Mr Offer: This is why earlier on I have said that the Minister of Environment should be a full-time minister, not sharing the portfolio with other areas of responsibility. The concern we have, Mr Part-Time Minister, is the impact your delay will have in the long-term health and safety of residents in this part of the province. We want your assurance, the health reports you have on hand, that you will table in this Legislature with the residents that there will not be any health and safety concerns to the residents of Smithville, that their health and their safety will not be jeopardized by your delaying the cleanup of this PCB-contaminated site.

Hon Mr Wildman: I appreciate the member's interest in the concern for the health and safety of the residents, and as I said earlier, I will take this as notice and report back. As to his preamble: Balderdash.

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AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): My question is for the government House leader and the minister responsible for auto insurance.

The reports on rehabilitation and long-term care which you released last Thursday contained almost 100 recommendations for change to automobile insurance regulations. In your report you said the following:

"The recommendations will be reviewed in a further round of consultation with interested parties before the government implements changes to existing regulations."

My question to the minister is: I'd like to know what your timetable is for this consultation and when exactly you plan to introduce or release the regulations for Bill 164.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The minister responsible for auto insurance.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet and Government House Leader): The member has raised an interesting question, but he should understand something right from the outset: His question would indicate that he doesn't understand whose report it is that's just been released, because it isn't my report. It's the report of a task force that was set up by myself, made up of the insurance industry, a number of consumers' groups and a number of accident victims' groups across the province. The report is theirs, not mine.

The review he refers to, the further consultation, will take a matter of just a few short weeks, and we will be making announcements accordingly.

Mr Tilson: I think that's one of the concerns we've had throughout this entire exercise of Bill 164, because Bill 164, during the public hearings we've had—we've had extensive hearings, including extensive public hearings, and this was based on the draft regulations you put forward at that time for Bill 164. That was the whole premise of Bill 164: based on those regulations and the benefit packages that arose from those regulations.

During the hearings, you suggested to me and the member for Willowdale that perhaps you would consider doing away with the deductible test and having a verbal threshold test. You now have the review of a task force which is going to have considerable time with respect to the hearings. I'm glad you say there are only two weeks, but that's an extended period of time. You've asked Professor Arthur to advise you as to a new advocacy system. You've done away with the lawyers in this province as far as automobile insurance is concerned—although Professor Arthur is a lawyer, interestingly enough. You're now doing away with the lawyers and you're going to develop an advocacy

system, something you know nothing about, something you have no idea about what it will cost the taxpayers of this province. I will say—

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): You know what Shakespeare said about lawyers.

Mr Tilson: Yes, I did hear what Shakespeare said, and I think that's the problem with this government.

The Speaker: Will the member place a question, please.

Mr Tilson: My question to the minister is: Will you withdraw Bill 164, with all of these uncertainties you're creating and continue to create, and go back to the drawing board and start all over?

Hon Mr Charlton: Well, the answer to the last part first: No, we will not withdraw Bill 164. The member opposite obviously should take the time to sit down and look at Bill 164 and the task force report he's referring to. The task force report was not only developed by the very groups who made presentations before the public hearings on Bill 164, but the task force report addresses a lot of the cost-pressure problems that they themselves identified during those public hearings.

To use the member's words referring to uncertainty, the task force report has significantly reduced the extent of any uncertainty around Bill 164.

TOBACCO INDUSTRY

Mr Norm Jamison (Norfolk): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. As you know, part of this government's expenditure control program announced last month included \$52.9 million within your ministry. One of the measures taken to achieve that reduction within OMAF was the deferral of the exit component of the tobacco sector adjustment strategy, amounting to a savings of \$3 million of the \$32-million program. This three-year joint federal-provincial initiative was designed to assist farmers to get out of tobacco and into alternative crops.

I understand that the tobacco crop size forecast for this year is larger this year than other years and that the \$3-million portion deferred from the exit program was money that may not have been utilized by the tobacco producers this year or in future anyway.

Could the minister tell the House what impact this reduction will likely have on the tobacco industry?

Hon Elmer Buchanan (Minister of Agriculture and Food): I'd like to thank the member for the question. First of all, we do not see this deferral as having a significant impact on the industry and on the tobacco farmers. The member is quite right. There's \$3 million taken out of the tobacco adjustment program for this year. This is a federal/provincial-funded program. We are looking at the long-term future of the tobacco farmers and we're working with a group in the tobacco belt to deal with their long-term future.

However, the 1993 crop looks fairly promising. There are a number of export markets available for tobacco and, as the member noted in his question, there isn't the same need for that exit money as there may have been, as we felt, a year or so ago.

We are maintaining a fund there, though; there is money left in such a fund which will help with the second component, which is diversification. We have left \$500,000 in that particular fund. We would expect that the federal government will leave at least \$500,000 in its side of it, although I would note that Mr Mazankowski, when he did his cutting of expenditures, did not seem to cut back on any spending, so he may leave his full \$3 million in there. That would be nice.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Buchanan: We will continue to work with the growers and the industry to make sure there is a future. We do not think the cuts we've made here will severely impact the area or the industry.

Mr Jamison: I am encouraged to hear that kind of comment from the Minister of Agriculture and Food. As you know, this particular issue impacts a number of ridings, but mine particularly: Norfolk. It also impacts Elgin and Oxford and surrounding ridings. It's a very important issue.

In many previous discussions with the minister, I had indicated a need to study the impact of the tobacco economy on local communities. I was greatly encouraged to hear last December of the formation of the government-community-industry committee led by your ministry. Their role was to evaluate the role tobacco plays in the region and to suggest how the community could best meet future challenges. Could you please provide me and the House and my constituents with an update on the progress of this particular committee's work?

Hon Mr Buchanan: The member is referring to a committee that was set up some time ago. It's a very innovative committee. It has government participation. In fact, there are six ministries from the provincial government, along with the federal government, community-based groups, the municipal politicians, tobacco farmers and the industry people themselves, as well as labour representatives, looking at the importance of tobacco to this region. They're also looking at: What does the future look like? If in fact tobacco is not going to have the same importance in the economy of that region, what else is available? They're looking at alternatives to tobacco in a long-range analysis.

They have had a meeting. It's really gratifying to see the cooperation they're having, and they're having a second meeting coming up. They're going to continue to meet and make sure that this part of the province has a future—

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Buchanan: —even if tobacco is not the primary product that's grown in that area.

GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Minister of Labour. Minister, there have been many questions raised in this House and in committee over the sweetheart deal struck between the Workers' Compensation Board through its not-so-arm's-length WCB investment fund, the Toronto-Dominion Bank and Cadillac Fairview to build, own and occupy Simcoe Place, a new 30-storey office tower in Toronto.

Questions have been asked about the deal by me and by others before me. My question however, Minister, goes to the role, proper or improper, of the board itself. Section 64 of the Workers' Compensation Act states, and I quote, "Subject to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the board may purchase or otherwise acquire"—"otherwise acquire" being key words—"such real property, as it may consider necessary for its purposes, and may, with the like approval, sell or otherwise dispose of any such property."

Minister, did this decision come to cabinet or to you as the Minister of Labour, and if so, what was the decision? Where is the order in council approving the deal, the acquisition and/or the 20-year lease on Simcoe Place?

1440

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): The Workers' Compensation Board did not violate section 64 of the act, for the following reasons: The acquisition of an interest in the ground lease in the Simcoe Place project will be made by a separate legal entity and not by the WCB itself; the acquisition of an interest in a ground lease does not constitute the purchase or acquisition of real property. And I would say as well that I find it very strange that a proposition that was pretty well set by the previous government is now being questioned by the member across the way, when they presented it to us as a good proposition and one where they would have an investment in 75% of the costs of the building.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, I'm not allowed to say a member in this House is being misleading, but that was awfully close.

Let me be very clear that our government did not approve this deal. We have a former Minister of Labour sitting in this House who will stand testament to the fact that we did not approve this deal. You did, sir. Your government approved this deal.

My understanding also is that this so-called arm's-length organization, the WCB investment fund, is actually run by a committee of the Workers' Compensation Board and it has very direct input into the decisions

that are made. It would appear that a legal opinion was sought to allow the Workers' Compensation Board to get around the requirement of section 64 to avoid the possibility of having to come and embarrass you and this government and ask you to approve this deal.

Minister, somebody is playing games in the construction of Simcoe Place, making sweetheart deals and finding ways to get around the rules. You were asked in committee and you refused to agree. Will you ask the Provincial Auditor to investigate the nonsense that has gone on in the approval of the construction of Simcoe Place and the signing of a lease and the commitment of the Workers' Compensation Board to substantial moneys, \$13 million a year, for the next 20 years?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: The Provincial Auditor has the right to investigate any matter, and I'm certainly not going to instruct him as to what he has to do in terms of his job.

I would also like to say that the WCB investment of 75% interest in this building is seen it as a very, very good deal.

Just to carry it a little further, I think it's interesting that one of the questions we asked, after almost a fait accompli was presented to us, was, "What kind of study have you done in the city of Toronto?" and Royal LePage was appointed to look at 34 locations across this city and none of them, none of them, met the requirements for the Workers' Compensation Board building.

BUNGEE JUMPING

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, and it concerns the minister's decision—or lack of decision—on the task force report on bungee jumping.

Minister, you have left mobile crane bungee operators dangling long enough. Your task force report came out in February, so I ask you: Will the province's 11 mobile crane bungee establishments be allowed to open this summer, yes or no?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): I should be making an announcement on this very issue later on this week.

Mr Jim Wilson: Beach Bungee is located in Wasaga Beach, and it will employ some 20 people on a full-time basis this summer. However, my constituents are about to have their life's savings wiped out because the minister intends to ban bungee jumping from mobile cranes instead of bringing in regulations that would allow mobile crane operators to, first, stay in business, to continue to employ people and, third, to help Ontario communities compete for tourism dollars. These operators would not be forced out of operation if the minister would simply bring in regulations. Minister, why don't you do your job and effectively regulate bungee-jumping, rather than driving my constituents out of business?

Hon Ms Churley: I do take the question seriously. After the tragic death last year of a young man who was test-jumping a bungee ride, there was a task force set up with members from my ministry and representatives from the Ministry of Labour and also industry, and they came forward very recently with recommendations. There was a coroner's inquest as well related to this death which just very recently came out. We have taken the recommendations seriously and, as I said, I will be making an announcement later this week on what the ministry intends to do.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): My question today is for the Minister of Environment and Energy, if he's—yes, he's there.

Mr Minister, the opposition last week, in their usual doom-and-gloom manner, suggested that in expenditure control measures this government is backing away from its traditional commitment to supporting summer employment opportunities for young people in Ontario.

My question: I want to know, on behalf of the young people in my riding of Durham East, and in fact on behalf of all the young people in the province of Ontario, whether or not the government of Ontario is indeed backing away from this commitment. Specifically, I want to know the status of the Environmental Youth Corps program. Is it on, how much money will be spent and how many positions are you going to open?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The Ministry of Environment and Energy remains committed to youth employment opportunities in the province, particularly as it relates to environmentally oriented projects. The ministry is providing \$11.9 million in funding this summer and fall to encourage environmental protection and conservation projects, and it's expected that this funding will create more than 3,600 job opportunities in 900 projects for young people across the province. It works out to approximately 20 or 25 less positions for the Environmental Youth Corps than last year.

Mr Mills: Such a wonderful answer, Mr Speaker, I haven't got a supplementary.

FUEL CONSERVATION TAX

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Thank you to the member for Durham East for that.

My question is to the Treasurer, and I have a suggestion for the Treasurer in my question that I have made to him on many occasions. He has ignored it and you can see the state of the Ontario economy as a result.

My question to the Treasurer is the following—or the Minister of Finance as they call him now—would the Minister of Finance assure the House that when he is developing his budget, he intends to remove the tax on the auto workers of this province, that tax being the

so-called “gas guzzler tax” that he wishes to try to disguise as an environmental tax? In doing so, by removing this tax, he will stimulate the sales of automobiles in this province and put auto workers back to work, while at the same time encouraging residents of this province to purchase new vehicles and turn in their old clunkers, therefore ensuring that we have better fuel economy and better pollution abatement equipment in our vehicles.

A perfect, positive suggestion for the Treasurer, and I'll be prepared to applaud him if he will finally acquiesce to a very positive and reasonable suggestion.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): It is tempting to comply with the request of the member for St Catharines if I thought he really would applaud me, but I know that he would not, no matter what I did.

I would of course not want to discuss tax policy prior to the budget, other than to say that I continue to be flabbergasted, if not shocked and appalled, that a former Minister of the Environment, who I always put in the category of a crusading minister, would have the audacity to come and propose to this House and to the people of Ontario such an anti-environment message.

However, having said that, having said how surprised I am that he would now take such an anti-environment position, I would not want to tip my hand as to whether or not there will be a change in that tax.

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MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move that notwithstanding any standing order of the House, the House meet in the morning of Wednesday, June 9, 1993, for the consideration of private members' public business, and when the House adjourns that day, it shall stand adjourned until Monday, June 14, 1993, and that Monday, June 14, 1993, be not considered as one of the last eight sessional days in June for the purposes as set out in the standing orders.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

PETITIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition addressed to:

“The Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

“Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

“Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers;

“Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in

higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I have affixed this petition to which I heartily agree.

GAMBLING

Mr Dave Johnson (Don Mills): I have a petition from the Church of the Ascension, Anglican Church of Canada, Don Mills parish, which reads as follows:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

It is signed by 58 petitioners, and I've added my signature to the list.

DRIVERS' LICENCES

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): "To the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1990 the Ontario Ministry of Transportation demonstrated its good intentions by proposing a system of graduated licensing that would require newly licensed drivers to adhere to certain conditions and restrictions which would be removed as the driver gains driving experience; and

"Whereas statistics show new drivers of any age are five times more likely to be involved in road accidents due to lack of experience, death and injury from traffic-related accidents continues to be the biggest risk facing Canadians between the ages of 16 and 24, and research strongly suggests a graduated licensing program would result in decreased traffic accidents, reduce injuries, save lives and make our roads safer,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate action to revise the laws, specifi-

cally the Highway Traffic Act, to include a graduated licensing program for novice drivers.

"As concerned parents and citizens of Ontario, we believe now is the time to take action to protect our young and novice drivers and, in effect, our very future."

I have 254 signatures and I affix my name.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I am glad to rise in the House again and to increase the number of petitions against casinos by another few to add to the thousands who have written to the government against casino gambling.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm very pleased to affix my signature to this very important petition.

Mr Peter North (Elgin): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

It has some 71 signatures on it.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear

energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

I have affixed my signature to the petition.

GAMBLING

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I too attach my signature to this.

MOTORCYCLES

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): With the nice weather that we're having now, there are more bicycles, mopeds and motorcycles on the roads, and I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario agreed to the text and spirit of resolution 29, which states, 'That in the opinion of the House, given that motorcycles use less of everything, the government of Ontario should promote the use of motorcycles,'

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to proclaim the month of May 1993 as Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month in the province of Ontario."

I affix my signature to the petition.

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): I also have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario agreed

to the text and spirit of resolution 29," which was presented by Mike Cooper in 1992, "which states, 'That in the opinion of this House, given that motorcycles use less of everything, the government of Ontario should promote the use of motorcycles,'

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to proclaim the month of May as Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month in the province of Ontario."

I have another 40 signatures on this petition and I affix my signature also.

GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition from a number of people concerned about casino gambling. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

1500

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

As I'm in agreement with this, I'm affixing my signature to this petition.

LA VIOLENCE

M. Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & Grenville-Est) : J'ai une pétition ici provenant de l'école du Saint-Rosaire à Crysler, Ontario, des étudiants et des parents des élèves qui sont grandement inquiets de la violence dans notre communauté et dans notre domaine. La pétition dit comme suit :

«À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

«Nous, soussignés, résidents du Canada et de l'Ontario, nous prévalons maintenant de notre droit ancien et incontesté de présenter un grief commun dans l'assurance certaine que votre Assemblée législative y portera remède.

«Nous déclarons humblement :

«Attendu que les parents et les grands-parents demandent que la mise en marché du jeu Serial Killer Board Game, First Edition, de Tobias Allen de Seattle soit interdite ici au Canada et en Ontario ;

«Deuxièmement, attendu que ce jeu contient une housse mortuaire, 25 bébés et quatre figurines de meurtrier et que l'objet du jeu est de commettre des meurtres et que la personne qui réussit à tuer le plus grand nombre de bébés remporte la partie ;

«Et, troisièmement, attendu que ce jeu va à l'encontre de l'intérêt des enfants et qu'il pourrait être dangereux s'il était mis entre mauvaises mains et qu'il est suggestif pour les jeunes gens, qui se laissent facilement impressionner ;

«À ces causes, vos pétitionnaires demandent humblement à votre parlement ainsi qu'au gouvernement du Canada d'interdire la vente du Serial Killer Board Game, First Edition, et ainsi d'empêcher que de tels jeux ou matériels soient rendus disponibles ici au Canada et en Ontario afin de protéger les enfants vulnérables.»

Il y a 46 signatures à cette pétition, et j'y ai apposé la mienne. J'appuie cette pétition fortement.

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): I have a petition here that's addressed to the Speaker of the House and the Parliament of Ontario. It's signed by people from Merlin, from Chatham, from Paincourt, from Tilbury, from Mooretown and Petrolia, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas we, the undersigned, support the voluntary use of bicycle helmets promoted as part of a comprehensive bicycle safety program; and

"Whereas we, the undersigned, oppose the province's plan to mandate the use of bicycle helmets as being an exclusive restriction of personal rights to choose for ourselves guaranteed under the Constitution,

"We respectfully submit this petition for your consideration."

They're asking for the repeal of the possible legislation that will make bicycle helmets mandatory in the province of Ontario, and I present the petition forward.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): This petition forms part of a petition that collected well over 15,000 names in support of the future of Bruce A. Among other things, it indicates that:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and

will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

I have affixed my name to the petition.

GAMBLING

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a petition with a number of signatures from Windsor, Ontario, and it's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

TAXICABS

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I too have a petition here. It's from TTOOA, the Toronto Taxicab Owners and Operators Association. It's addressed to the Lieutenant Governor. They're upset at Metro, and I don't blame them.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): I have a petition sponsored by State Farm Insurance of Strathroy and signed by some 83 of its customers and area residents that asks the Legislative Assembly to repeal Bill 164.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Mr Speaker, as you know, there are 15,000-plus signatures on this petition that I now deliver to you.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective.

Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

In addition to the 15,600 signatures, this is supported by several groups, representing labour, business, local municipalities, chambers of commerce, school boards and riding associations in our area. These signatures happen to be from the Whitby-Oshawa-Ajax area and accompany the last petition, which originated out of the Essex and Belle River area.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SISTERS OF CHARITY AT OTTAWA ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Grandmaître, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr81, An Act respecting the Sisters of Charity at Ottawa.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS RELATIVES AUX MUNICIPALITÉS

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management / Loi modifiant certaines lois relatives aux municipalités en ce qui concerne la gestion des déchets.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Continuing the debate, I believe it's on the government side. If not, we'll go to the member for Lawrence.

1510

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I'm very pleased today to speak on Bill 7, the municipal waste management act, because I think this affords me an opportunity once again to demonstrate how in fact this government has now become identifiable in terms of its modus operandi. It does have one now. I can honestly stand up and say I'm beginning to understand what it is that this government is attempting to accomplish or at least what it thinks it's accomplishing, because up until now it has been very difficult to determine or to understand, as an observer, the direction in which this government was moving.

When you look back on the record, you begin to see a pattern that has emerged, a pattern which suggests that this government throws all of its ideas out the window upon entering into government, all the old ideas which most of us on this side understood were probably inaccurate, misguided and at best as far from practical reality as you could get.

Most of the issues which this government and this

party that's in office now advocated during the time it was in opposition we're beginning to understand it has no connection with. It is completely severing itself from its past, attempting to reconstitute itself, attempting to get in touch with reality. Two and a half years after it was elected, it is coming to grips with reality. Those are the statements made by the Treasurer, the Minister of Finance, the Premier and others. Of course, getting in touch with what reality? Their reality. I have to say it's at least an attempt by this government to understand that the real world around us is rather different from the world which they saw upon entering government.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): He doesn't know anything about waste management.

Mr Cordiano: The member sitting in his chair—I believe the member is the parliamentary assistant—should be a little more patient when other members speak, since when he speaks no one interrupts him.

Mr Wiseman: I'm not the parliamentary assistant.

Mr Cordiano: You know what I say to the member on the opposite side who's interrupting and interjecting? There's plenty of time. I have 27 minutes, and if he would be patient and listen, he might learn something along the way.

I know one thing: We are in opposition for whatever faults we had. I think we paid that price in the last election and I can honestly say that we're willing to learn. We're willing to examine what mistakes we made along the road. We're willing to say, "Look, the world is changing and we're examining all the policies that are being put forth."

Let's get back to the municipal waste management act, because this is instructive to demonstrate the kind of misguided, if you will, or misconstrued policies of this government, comparing that to its policies when it was in opposition, comparing the diametrically opposed position that is now being taken to the party that was the NDP when it was in opposition.

The Interim Waste Authority has been mandated to find new dump sites. A number of designated sites have been brought up to be considered and three will be chosen of those designated sites. No one would have imagined that this government would have approached this question in such a way as it is now—that is, by central decree determining what waste sites will be used in the future for Metro Toronto garbage and York region garbage. That is to say, they're avoiding all the various proper procedures that have been put in place. A full environmental assessment is going to be bypassed in order to have a fast-track site, if you will, designated; three sites that will be determined.

Nothing could be further from the original intention of this party. Nothing could be more hypocritical, if you will, of the policies of the previous party in opposition. At the every best, it's hypocrisy, because it's a total

reversal of what was advocated by this party in opposition. They have done that repeatedly.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Oriole, the member for Durham West. There is one member who is allowed to speak and it's the member for Lawrence.

Mr Cordiano: Thank you, Mr Speaker. What Bill 7 does in the final analysis is it enables municipalities to bring about user fees for the purpose of waste management activities throughout the province. A cynic might say—and I will say it, because I am cynical about this government—that this is but the beginning, the beginning of a trend which will see the implementation of user fees for just about everything. Because in the final analysis, this party is so contorted now that it has no real understanding of where it was and where it wants to go, so it's making policy on the fly. They're in fact making policy in a kind of diametrically opposed situation which says, "Well, we believed in this, but it doesn't work, so let's just leave it behind, wash that away, bring on something new, because we've got this problem now and we have to deal with it."

But the advice it ultimately listens to looks so confused, so ill-thought-out. In fact, no one has any real idea whether the trends that are being started today will worsen the situation, deteriorate the system we have in place, deteriorate the services we have in place, making it that much more difficult to recover from in the final analysis, when things do get better—and they will get better at some point.

But the legacy of this administration will be to have set in motion a number of initiatives which will alter the landscape for ever. It will be unrecognizable, what comes after this: user fees for just about everything, making the user pay, and tolls on our roads. New roads will only be constructed if there are tolls; there's no way to construct new roads, according to this government, unless you make somebody who uses them pay for it.

What I'm afraid of is that something that was held so sacrosanct by all members of this House, and I believe all Canadians, our health care system—is that next? Is that going to be threatened? In fact, there are a number of things that point to that already in the works, and that's a real fear on the part of many, many people. Why? It's because you have misguided, mismanaged resources on the part of this administration, making that conclusion, of course, the only one that's left.

When you squander resources, you then have to make up for the squandering by instituting heavy burdens on people, the taxpayers. The Treasurer—the Minister of Finance, pardon me, as he is now called—has indicated that not only is he cutting back on services, not only is he going to make it difficult for people to have access

to the very basic and essential services that they have come to know in this province, but he's going to impose even more onerous taxes, making it that much more expensive for the services that will be left to them, services which I've already pointed out are less than adequate for the people of this province in most areas, making it so that you pay more for less.

That's the arithmetic that this government understands. That's the legacy of this government: We're going to pay more to have less. That's the phrase that I think will be used ultimately to describe the days in which this government was in office: more for less; pay more to have less. I think that comes as a result of squandering resources and mismanaging. Ultimately, it costs taxpayers a lot more than it would have, a lot more.

1520

Bill 7, as I say, does a number of things which I think are very useful and very practical. I think it's quite possible that we may even support this bill, quite possible. On the other hand—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): You haven't decided yet?

Mr Cordiano: Well, I've got to talk to the critic, and he'll give us more information as to whether we can. But I think I should say that this bill attempts to do a number of things which I think are quite positive in the whole area of waste management.

The bill, with amendments to the Municipal Act, will allow municipalities to establish and operate facilities for all waste management activities. In many municipalities, that's going to be welcome. It will require source separation of waste and recyclables and establish user fees, as I pointed out, under property.

Now, that's the area that I have most difficulty with, establishing user fees, because you'll get uneven services, again, throughout the province.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): A tax on the poor.

Mr Cordiano: A tax on the poor. The poorer municipalities, if they want this service, are going to have to impose user fees for that, and that will ultimately lead to higher taxes.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The member for Etobicoke West and the member for Durham West, if you want to carry on a conversation, don't do it in the House. There's a debate going on and everybody's interested in listening to the debate, so I would ask you please to remain quiet. The member for Lawrence.

Mr Cordiano: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My colleague the critic for Environment for our party, the member for Mississauga North, has also pointed out another of our concerns; that is, the upper-tier municipalities vis-à-vis the lower-tier municipalities and what this means in terms of jurisdictional squabbling and the

responsibility that an upper-tier municipality will be able to assume over a lower-tier municipality to take on the authority for this area. That leaves municipalities in the kind of situation which could lead to further squabbling among them, and of course that's not very constructive, so I think this is an area that needs to be straightened out by the government before we proceed.

As I say, we could even end up supporting this bill if some of our concerns are laid to rest. I think there's further work that needs to be done. That's why it's essential, as has been pointed out by the critic for our party, that we do have public hearings in this area, that we do have a thorough going over of the concerns, of the problems that result from the amendments to the various acts that we're speaking of. I think it's important that people understand that there are concerns with this piece of legislation and that we do have areas that need more work, areas that need to be exposed with respect to different views so that these concerns can be overcome.

I think with respect to those concerns that it is reasonable for us to assume that the differences between upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities can be resolved, that it's not going to lead to a polarized position between upper- and lower-tier municipalities and that ultimately it will not lead to more conflict, because that's the last thing we need among municipalities. I know in Metro that essentially that is not a problem, but of course, if I listen to the good mayor of North York, he estimates that with the cutbacks that are being imposed in the restraint program, the blue box program in North York is in serious jeopardy. If not that, then it's going to lead to additional tax increases, which no one can support at this time and which no one can bear.

And that is the crux of the various initiatives by this government to deal with the deficit problem, the fact that they're going to rely on a \$2.5-billion tax increase once again to bail them out from their own mismanagement woes, rather than over the last two years listen to the good advice of the various members on this side of the House who have repeatedly called for restraint.

Two years ago, when they first came out and said they were going to fight the recession by spending more, crank it up and get it spent—they've done that in a variety of areas, not the least of which is affordable housing, and as a result of their mismanagement, as a result of their squandering of resources, they have now jeopardized the non-profit housing sector. And I mean jeopardized, because as a result of their mismanagement people now have come to believe that non-profit housing is not a viable alternative. There are many people questioning the viability of government funds being spent on non-profit housing.

They've jeopardized a very good program that had been around long before this administration came to power, programs that had been there under the previous

administration and the one before it, both Tories and Liberals who had brought about non-profit housing in a variety of forms. But then this government came along in the midst of a severe recession, in the midst of our crisis economically, and it's allocating projects and units at will in areas where it cannot be determined whether or not there's a need for these housing allocations. They're squandering those units, and now, to our understanding, we find out that there are housing units within those projects which are going wanting, unfilled, vacancies in areas which have pretty large, substantial vacancy rates. That's mismanagement of the worst kind.

As the auditor has pointed out with non-profit housing, \$1.2 billion in subsidies will be spent by the year 1995-96. That's unacceptable, totally unacceptable. You need to manage the systems better in order to do that.

It brings me back to this bill, Bill 7. As I say, there is example after example of the kind of administration we're seeing from this government, the kind of squandering of resources which then leads, of course, to things like user fees, which have been suggested and insinuated in Bill 7: Allow municipalities to impose user fees so they can bring about the kind of program, the blue box program and the other waste management systems, which in other parts of the province have become commonplace and people have grown to accept them and expect them.

The uneven level of services throughout the province is something this party, the NDP, spoke against many moons ago, it seems now, when it was a different party. Of course, now they're not in touch with anything. They haven't really got a full understanding of where they're going, and I would say they've lost themselves in the woods. They really haven't quite got a direction in which they're moving that they can all feel comfortable with and can all support, and we see that they're tearing apart at the seams. There are a number of pressures on this party, on this administration, to move in all kinds of directions.

But I say to this government, that's precisely why it's difficult for people out in the public to support an administration or a party such as the one that's in power now, because they never know what direction it's moving in next. You can't really figure it out, because this government—

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): Sounds Liberal.

Mr Cordiano: I say to the member opposite that if we Liberals were in power, we'd have a clear sense of what we were going to do. We told you two years ago to bring about a full stop in terms of the wasteful spending you had embarked on, and you didn't listen to either ourselves or the Tories, for that matter.

Mr Stockwell: They're listening now.

Mr Cordiano: It's a little too late, I would say to

the member, because I'll tell you what: The program you're bringing about with restraint is having such a psychological shocking effect on the people of this province, it's going to result in even further destabilizing in the economy, destabilizing in the way people think, because confidence is simply not there.

What they're doing now, bringing about a full stop, if you will, cutting back to the extent that they are, is having a terrible, traumatic impact on people. They don't know if they're going to lose their jobs in certain areas of the province. There's simply no confidence at all to invest in anything. Anything this administration has done has simply not proven to be a positive step forward to create the kind of confidence that's necessary to get us out of this recession—simply not there.

After two years of spending wildly, and really that's the only way you can describe it, running up the deficit to more than \$10 billion—probably \$12 billion is the real figure; they keep relying on transfer payments that haven't come in from Ottawa, which will probably never come in.

Mr Stockwell: You've been reduced to taking lectures from the Liberals.

Mr Cordiano: I'd remind my friends in the third party, do not forget that in the last 20 years this is the party that brought in a balanced budget and in fact had a surplus. Let's not forget about that.

Interjections.

Mr Cordiano: Yes, sir, and fine, we may have done it by increasing taxes, but we did it at a time when the economy was booming. In fact, those taxes probably brought inflation back somewhat and brought the economy of the province—despite what these people would have you believe—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Cordiano: Despite that, the policies of our government led to a surplus. That's not something the Tories in Ottawa could say, certainly nowhere near it, when they had a booming economy over the period 1985-90. The government in Ottawa failed miserably when it should have brought its expenditures under control, simply didn't do it, and now in Ottawa we're continuing to feel the effects of deficit spending under a Tory administration that simply did not deal with it.

The rhetoric sounded good in those days, but I would say we all have to look at what it is that we're attempting to accomplish, and this administration has to realize that the impact of its cutbacks now, the impact of its restraint program, will have a real shocking effect to the system, a real shock. It's going to traumatize a number of people. Confidence simply isn't there. People feel that they're next to lose their jobs, and that inevitably leads to even more declines in revenues. Your revenues cannot increase in that climate.

We have serious concerns with the way this government is managing the province's revenues, the province's fiscal concerns. As a result, we're concerned that the opposite impact will be felt in this province, that revenues will continue to decline and expenditures will continue to increase. I say to the government: It's a little too late in terms of the kinds of medicine that you're applying to the patient that's ill, a little too late. The medicine simply doesn't go far enough.

I'd say to members opposite and anyone else who's listening today that Bill 7 has received some support out there. AMO's obviously generally supportive of it, and some other interest groups are also supportive, but in the final analysis the concerns we have with respect to Bill 7, that is, the potential conflict that will result from Bill 7 between upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities, needs to be resolved. It simply cannot go forward without looking at that as a major concern and as a major fault in this bill.

In addition, I would also caution the government that in establishing Bill 7, you are creating a precedent with respect to user fees. You're allowing municipalities then to move forward and charge user fees to establish waste management activities and programs, and that, I say to my friends, I hope does not lead to a further usage of user fees in other areas which are very important to the province, and does not further deteriorate the services that people depend on and that people need in this province.

Particularly, I would say to all those members opposite who are sitting—the backbenchers should listen to this, because you're going to be very concerned about what happens to health services in your ridings, because that's next. When you've got to cut and you're slashing and you're hacking away at budgets, user fees loom large in the picture.

You'd better take care with respect to the initiatives that you're undertaking now and that you're going to support now, because user fees are the next item on the agenda that I think this administration is seriously looking at. I see the Minister of Transportation sitting in the House today, and I would say that as to toll booths on our roads, again, he's proposed this, or his administration is looking at it. I would say to him that's just an example of what I'm suggesting here, user fees you're going to depend on. You're going to start leaning on them very heavily.

You've got to look at where efficiencies can be gained in other areas. You've got to start looking at the problems I pointed out, such as the squandering of resources in affordable housing, the squandering of resources in a variety of other areas which we've pointed out in this House, and furthermore the fact that you have not created an environment for the economy to improve over the long term. It's simply not allowing for job creation to take place in a meaningful way and,

as a result, revenues may decline further. I hope you understand that, and I hope you understand that revenues will decline if you don't take care with respect to how you manage the economy and the squandering of resources.

I would say in closing that there are a number of things, as I pointed out, in Bill 7 that are positive initiatives and steps in the right direction to allow for the management of waste in this province to be conducted in a more rational, more efficient way and to allow municipalities to bring about programs which they thus far have not been able to do. But, again, user fees are something that concern me and concern our party generally. So I would say, look carefully at that and look at the alternatives, because that's not something we want to set in motion as a precedent.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I would say that I look forward to comments from other members.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions or comments.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I will say that some of the issues that were raised by the member for Eglinton I think are of interest to us all, specifically the—

Mr Stockwell: Not Eglinton, Lawrence.

Mr Tilson: Did I say his wrong name?

Mr Stockwell: It's Lawrence.

Mr Tilson: The member for Lawrence, I'm sorry. His comments certainly were most useful in some areas, although I was concerned when he started taking shots at previous governments, and particularly our government, specifically—

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): No.

Mr Tilson: Well, I'll tell you: Specifically, you looked at the province of Ontario, at what happened to this province when they took over, the most taxed jurisdiction—at least until you people came along—in North America. So don't forget that when you're listening to the member for Lawrence's comments.

I will say that he did make some worthwhile comments, specifically on the issue of user fees, and that may be a good or a bad thing.

The area that I am concerned with is when the municipalities are being forced to get into these projects, these plans—all of which are very good; we must emphasize that, but we don't know what they're going to cost, and I'm going to emphasize that over and over. We're getting into another venture that we have no idea what it's going to cost. The provinces are strapped—the municipalities are strapped, and the province is strapped as well, so if you're going to get municipalities into something, we must have some vague idea at least as to how we're going to pay for it. He raised one alternative of user fees. That may or may not be a solution, and it gives us great concern, getting into something, getting

us into a venture when we have no idea of the area it's going to cost.

The second issue he raised was the jurisdictional issue. There's no question, at least on the way the wording of the sections are phrased now, that there is going to be a jurisdictional war, as it was described, between upper-tier and lower-tier governments, and perhaps even by the lower-tier municipalities themselves.

Hon Mr Pouliot: This is waste management.

Mr Tilson: Well, you say it's waste management, but that's not the way to go about things. The way to go about things is to consult with municipalities, and I'll tell you that AMO isn't supporting it the way the parliamentary assistant has suggested in the past.

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The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. The member for Downsview.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Just in responding very quickly to some of the comments that the member for Lawrence made, Mr Speaker, you sit in this House, and you understand that it's a partisan place, you understand that it divides essentially into three sections—and now perhaps we're having a fourth grown, an independent caucus, if you will. You understand that a lot of the stuff that is said in here and a lot of the criticisms are laid on a strictly partisan basis, and it's mostly intended to confuse the public out there, because what will happen during this transmission is that there's a good chunk of the Ontario public watching the proceedings today and they rely, essentially, on the members in this place to provide them with information.

While we're in the process of providing information, I'm of the view that if you live in a glass house, you don't throw stones. When I hear Liberals—and primarily Liberals, because at least I know where the Conservatives stand—on the issue of user fees, they would introduce user fees with respect to health care. You know what we have. We have a public plan. They would require you to pay on your own until we had a two-tier system: a health care system for the rich and a health care system for the poor. But when I hear the Liberals talk about it—and they're sort of in the middle and they sit on the fence and they're neither here nor there—when you look at their record, when you look at five years of Liberal governance and you look at the huge increases in health care, you look at the 10%, 11%, 12%, 13% increases year after year after year, it leads you to think, "Where would they have gone to and how far could they have let that problem go?" They would have let it go until the systems crumbled.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): I would like to address the early outpourings from the member for Lawrence, because I would like to just correct some of

the misinformation he provided.

It was under the Liberals, the previous administration, that you had the circumventing of the Environmental Assessment Act with the declaration that a landfill site called P1 would be placed in north Pickering. It was under the Liberals that you had the abrogation of the Environmental Assessment Act by saying that the Adams mine site in Kirkland Lake would receive waste under the Environmental Protection Act. It was under the Liberals that you had the lift on Keele Valley being placed there under the Environmental Protection Act and not under the Environmental Assessment Act. It was under the Liberals that you had the location of a landfill site in Brampton called site 6B that would be done under the Environmental Protection Act and not under the Environmental Assessment Act. For that member to stand in this place and to accuse this party—

Mr Perruzza: It's not his fault; he doesn't know.

Mr Wiseman: He doesn't know it. Well, it's obvious he doesn't know. He spent half an hour here talking about everything else other than this bill. To say we are misguided and mismanage resources is to understate that he does not understand what this is all about.

The waste management issue is a resources issue if you handle it properly. It can become the feedstock for jobs, as they are at Atlantic Packaging, or as they are in Welland-Thorold, or as they are at Recovery Plastics, or as they are in a whole host of industries in southern Ontario. This member clearly does not understand the waste management issue because he didn't speak to it for half an hour; he only recited the title of the bill twice.

Mr Dave Johnson (Don Mills): Just a couple of comments which have come to my mind as a result of the member for Lawrence speaking. One, I might add, is that I have received correspondence from Laidlaw, which has been involved with waste management in the province of Ontario for some time.

Laidlaw is very concerned about the role and existence of the private sector, which it feels has not been properly addressed under Bill 7. For example, they cite the study that was done by Dr Don Dewees, a professor of law and economics at the University of Toronto. His study has indicated that the private sector is able to deliver the service much more efficiently than the public sector in many areas of waste management and I don't think this has been appropriately addressed.

The member for Lawrence has talked about the financial situation and I think that this should be studied at greater depth at committee. I would hope these committees would take place during the summer and that there would be public consultation.

Laidlaw goes on to indicate that the consultation up to this point in time has been very slight. They indicate

that the committee's first meeting with OWMA, the Ontario Waste Management Association, was on April 29—just this past April 29—and there have been only two other meetings since that time. With respect to each of these meetings, participants were only given one to two hours' notice, clearly not enough time to prepare.

It demonstrates further that this bill has not been properly put forward to not only the people of Ontario but to the private sector, and there needs to be a great deal of public input into this bill before it's passed, and a number of changes to reflect that public input.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Lawrence, you have two minutes.

Mr Cordiano: I'm hesitant to respond in a personal way to some of the slights that have been made from across the way, but I would just simply say: There's only one issue that we are really dealing with here at all times and that's really the question of competence, the question of whether or not this administration has the competence, can manage the resources of this province, can manage properly, can manage effectively, with respect to Bill 7 or any other bill.

What I'm pointing out is that this government is completely incompetent, and this bill is really about giving municipalities the opportunity to do the kinds of things that should be done around the province, but the question is: Who's going to pay for it? That is really the issue. The issue is: Who's going to pay for it? Is it another tax on individuals out there by the imposition of user fees?

Once again, this government passes itself off as being defenders of the little guy, defenders of the individual out there, and the smug faces across the way with respect to the way in which you talk about health care in this province when we're seeing incredible reductions, an incredible pullback of services.

We're seeing a dismantling of the health care system in this province because you squandered resources when you first came to office. You spent like there was no tomorrow. You gave doctors in this province, on the one hand, an incredible increase in the OHIP fee schedule and now, on the other hand, they're going to slap them in the face by imposing reductions to interns. This government is nothing but hypocritical with respect to its long-held views—come into office and do exactly the opposite of whatever they were going to do before.

The Deputy Speaker: Any further debate? The member for Wellington.

Mr Hayes: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think it's appropriate that I do get up, as the member for Don Mills referred to a letter that he received from Laidlaw saying that there was no consultation or very little consultation—

The Deputy Speaker: I don't see a point of order there.

Mr Hayes: Have we got a new Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Essex-Kent, I don't see a point of order. Thank you very much.

Mr Hayes: Will you recognize me the next time, Mr Speaker, when we go around and I will refer to that? Thank you.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I'm very pleased and privileged to be here this afternoon on behalf of the people of Wellington to speak to Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management, a very, very important bill, a bill that was introduced for first reading April 21, just three weeks ago or so.

We really haven't had a lot of time to assess the response to this bill in our communities, and that's a concern I would put before the Legislature right off the top. It is difficult to gauge public reaction if we only have a couple of weeks between the initial introduction of the bill and its first reading, and we wonder, I suppose, why, because of the importance of this bill, it's being handled in this way.

Very briefly, this bill does a number of things in changes to the waste management legislation affecting municipalities. It follows the release of two discussion papers in public consultation which the government has undertaken.

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In March 1992 the Ministry of Municipal Affairs released a discussion paper called Municipal Waste Management Powers in Ontario and the Ministry of the Environment released a companion paper entitled Waste Management Planning in Ontario, and both papers outlined proposals for waste management reduction strategies, which is a very, very commendable goal on the part of this government. I believe it's a non-political issue at this time. We need to reduce our waste stream, no question about it.

A key component is the need for municipalities to expand their legislative powers to implement and operate effective waste management systems. This is what the government perceives to be a need and it's moving ahead in this direction.

Bill 7 amends the Municipal Act by adding sections 208.1 to 208.11. These new sections give municipalities the explicit power to establish, maintain and operate a waste management system, and a waste management system is defined as "facilities and services for the management of waste, including the collection, removal, transfer, processing, storage, reduction, reuse, recycling and disposal of the waste."

This bill establishes fees for the use of any part of a waste management system and requires individuals generating waste to separate at the point of collection. It prohibits and regulates dumping and disposal at facilities, appoints inspectors to obtain information

relating to sites or facilities and markets products from waste material.

One of the most important parts of the bill is that it revises the conditions under which a county may assume waste management responsibility from local municipalities. An amendment to subsection 209(4) of the Municipal Act allows a county to assume any or all waste management functions if a majority vote on county council representing a majority of local municipalities vote in favour. Current legislation requires two thirds of votes on county council to take over responsibility from the local municipalities, and there are other provisions that this bill addresses.

In response to the introduction of this bill back in April, our critic, our member for Don Mills, indicated that our party had some concerns about it, certainly the fact that the bill was silent on the issue of funding. Because of the expense of waste management as a government responsibility, funding is one of the most important issues, and I think one of the key issues that comes forth in this bill is the cost of waste management and who pays.

Another key issue is the accountability of who is responsible for waste management, and that comes as a part of the government's general thrust towards disentanglement of responsibilities. A subissue, maybe, is governance in rural Ontario as to who is responsible at the municipal level, whether it be the upper tier, the county, or the local municipalities directly, which is presently the case in Wellington county. I think the third key issue that this bill demonstrates is the government's plan for waste management legislation. I doubt there'll be another waste management bill this year and yet this bill does not address many of the most important waste management issues facing the province at this time.

When I started on the first issue, I mentioned the cost. We see that waste management is one of the most expensive responsibilities facing the government, and I would argue the growth of the cost of waste management has been very, very significant and probably one of the most significant growths of any government program, certainly with respect to the provincial government, that we have seen in some time.

As an example, in Wellington county we have an outstanding recycling program that was actually initiated back under the Liberal government in 1987, and this program is administered by the county of Wellington's road and engineering department. It collects recyclable material from all 21 municipalities in Wellington county, and there are about 20,000 blue boxes in Wellington county representing most of the households.

The total gross operating cost of the recycling program in Wellington county in 1992 was about \$437,000. Of course, that cost is offset by some of the sale of material that is collected through recycling, and that

generated about \$96,000 worth of revenue for the county. So if you look at it, about one quarter of the total cost of running the program was recouped by the sale of recycled material, resulting in a net operation cost for the county of \$340,000.

So it's an expensive program but I believe the public is behind it. It's well worth the expenditure, but we have to look, I think, at ways to improve it, such that we can encourage markets for the recyclable material, so that eventually I think the goal would have to be getting it to the point where it's run on a cost-recovery basis, that it requires no subsidy at all.

We're doing great things, I believe, with respect to recycling in Wellington county due to the work of our county council, the county council's waste management standing committee, Don Taylor, who is the waste reduction coordinator, and Reeve Laverne Harris of Eramosa township, who chairs our waste management committee on county council.

But we see the issue of recycling under attack in some quarters. There was an article in the *Toronto Star*, April 17, about a month ago, where Mayor Mel Lastman of North York talks about recycling as being an initiative which is very, very expensive, he says, and the quote is, "I don't know how you unsell it. Nobody wants to admit it's a bust," said Lastman. "I don't want to admit it, but it is. The blue box is going to put people in the poorhouse." So he's very concerned about the cost, and the article indicates that in North York about \$5 million of the local property tax bill is needed to subsidize the program. So it is a very expensive program, and there are some concerns there that should be addressed.

With respect to waste management master planning, we find that this bill doesn't get into that particular issue, but certainly we know that across the province many regions and counties, at the encouragement of the provincial government, have undergone major waste management planning exercises, long-term, looking towards managing their waste for the next 25 years in many cases. Again, it's a very expensive process.

In Wellington county we've been at the waste management master plan process for about 10 years in cooperation with the city of Guelph, jointly funded, and it's cost about \$4.2 million to date; so a very expensive program once again. We're at the point where the committee had identified a single site in Nickel township, N4, and the county council in Wellington voted to send that site as part of its waste management plan to the Ministry of the Environment for an environment assessment. Of course, the city of Guelph decided not to support that particular initiative, so we're sort of in a situation right now where the whole issue of dump sites in Wellington county is up in the air.

But that's just one waste management planning study in Wellington. Forty-six jurisdictions, counties and

regions in Ontario are undergoing these waste management master plan studies right now. I would submit to you, Mr Speaker, that in many cases this is consultants' work which is being done in duplication 46 times, and I would call upon the government to take a greater leadership role such that there isn't this duplication of consultancy work. There has to be a lot of commonality in these studies, and I'm absolutely convinced that if the Minister of the Environment were to show more leadership in terms of suggesting a preferred waste management system to municipalities that they could adopt in part or in whole, depending on their circumstances, or that they could tailor to their own specific needs, we'd be saving a lot of money on these waste management master plans.

There's another key component of the waste management planning in our area of the province, in Wellington and Guelph, and that is the city of Guelph's intention to develop and build a wet-dry recycling facility. For those members who aren't aware of this concept, the idea is to source-separate organic versus non-organic materials. You would have two different garbage receptacles in each household, and a garbage truck would come and pick up the receptacles and separate it, keep it separate. The organics would be turned into compost that would be sold, and the non-organics would be recycled to the extent that they could, and the rest would be landfilled.

There's been some controversy surrounding this particular initiative of the city. The cost is significant once again. As I've indicated, most of the waste management component parts are very expensive. Some \$36 million is planned for this particular initiative, and it's going to be an expensive proposition.

There have been concerns expressed about the location, the siting of the facility. The plan is to put it near the Guelph Airpark, which is a locally significant airport in our area, and the concern has been expressed that if there are seagulls or birds attracted to the composting facility, it may pose a threat to flight safety at the airport, so that's an issue.

The former Minister of the Environment—Etobicoke-Lakeshore, I guess, is her riding—shortly after her election as a member of the government and her appointment as minister, indicated to a group of concerned citizens in that area that there would be a full hearing before the establishment of the wet-dry facility, but it appears now that this hearing will not take place. I've been contacted by these concerned neighbours and have requested that the Minister of Environment and Energy at least meet with them so they can have an opportunity to express their concerns directly now to the new minister from Algoma. It's my understanding that that meeting has not yet taken place.

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The second key issue I would see in this bill is the issue of accountability: Who is responsible for waste

management? We see that the government has indicated a general thrust of its policy is to promote the concept of disentanglement, meaning that the appropriate level of government that can best deliver the service, that can deliver it most efficiently, should be given the absolute responsibility to deliver that service, so you wouldn't have the duplication of service, two levels of government, each jumping over each other, trying to deliver the service to people.

That, in and of itself, is a very desirable goal. We don't want to be paying for government service twice. I support the government's intention to go ahead on disentanglement. I think the more appropriate place to start would be in terms of cooperation with the federal government, because I think the vast majority of administrative overlap is between the federal government and provincial government, not between the provincial government and the municipalities, although there is some degree of overlap, as I'll get into later. But the Premier could show great leadership in his role as the Premier of the most populous province in Ontario if he were to take an aggressive move towards encouraging the other premiers and the federal government to undertake a number of steps to eliminate the waste and overlap between provincial ministries and federal ministries. In any case, the government's going ahead with disentanglement between provincial government and municipal government.

With respect to this bill, we're seeing a further step towards making it easier for county governments to take over the waste management job from local municipalities. It's my recollection that under the Liberal years, the Minister of the Environment of the day brought in a bill which would make it easier for counties to take over the waste management job from municipalities. At that time, I believe the provincial legislation stated that it would require a unanimous vote of county council to have the county take over the waste management responsibility from municipalities, and then the Liberal government changed that to two-thirds majority to allow for the transfer of responsibility. Now this government is taking it one step further to a simple majority: 50% plus one vote on a county council.

So we're seeing a government that is endeavouring to try to make it easier for counties to take over that responsibility. That's a fairly controversial issue, certainly in my area, with the people I consulted over the last week or so to try and get a feel for what municipal leaders feel about this bill. If you look at a hypothetical example that might exist, a local municipality, say a township in rural Ontario that looks after its own garbage, which has a great deal of excess capacity if it looks at its dump site—it may have 15 or 20 years if it just continues to use its own local garbage in that dump site—it's sitting pretty good and has no real problems with waste management in terms of siting

a new landfill site. Whereas other municipalities that, for a variety of reasons, may have a landfill site that's nearing its capacity, or large urban municipalities that may be virtually at the limit and in an emergency situation, perhaps applying for an extension of their licence to run the landfill to the Ministry of Environment, they're going to maybe support it.

I'm concerned that some municipalities that are in a difficult situation may get together and almost, so to speak, gang up on some of the ones that have a great deal of capacity in their existing landfill sites. I think, generally speaking, it's desirable to encourage a two-thirds majority on county council on important issues such as this one, because it's important that there is a good deal of consensus before the county council goes ahead on a specific controversial issue. If you only need a 50%-plus-one vote, a simple majority, you don't need as much consensus-building as you would if you needed a two-thirds majority to do something. So I'd lay that concern on the table for the government to consider, and I hope it will.

Of course, we also see that waste management is becoming increasingly complex in the regulatory requirements that the government has brought forward over the last number of years, and rightly so, because of the environmental concern about some existing older landfill sites. We see increasing complexity, and that, I suppose, is an argument in favour of encouraging the upper-tier level of municipal government, the counties, to take over the waste management responsibility. But I think the counter side to that argument is that if the county is taking over responsibility from the local municipalities, you see another step away from the concept of local autonomy, local people directly accountable to their neighbours, really. I think that's an important point to be considered, and that's something that would be lost if the county were to assume responsibility for waste management.

There are a number of other significant problems with respect to waste management that this bill does not address. I raised a number of my own concerns in the House back in December about things the government should be doing to improve the waste management situation in Ontario.

One of the first key issues that the government has not addressed yet is the issue of compensation. I really don't think there is a more emotional issue the government has to deal with than waste management. There are very few, anyway. This is a very emotional issue. If an individual receives a letter in his mailbox that says there's going to be a dump right on the next property behind him within a certain period of time, especially if he's a senior citizen, for example, whose entire net worth may be represented in that property, all of a sudden he fears that his net worth has instantly gone to zero overnight as a result of society's demand to put its

garbage some place.

That's a real concern, and I think that in many cases those concerns could be mitigated if the province were to go ahead and develop a suggested compensation policy that municipalities could adopt in part or in whole, or, if they had their own plans that they felt were more suitable to their own area, they could go ahead with those; but at least a suggested waste management compensation policy so that people had some degree of assurance that they weren't going to be bankrupt overnight as a result of the landfill siting situation. I think that would be an important step the government could take.

Secondly, I don't believe there is a high degree of understanding in Ontario, among the general populace, of the purpose and the process of the environmental assessment legislation. The environmental assessment legislation, as I understand it, has been set up to determine the very best and most appropriate waste management—whether it be a landfill site or a lot of projects—to ensure that an environmental mistake is not made, such that environmental damage will be avoided.

This is the whole reason we go through these environmental assessment hearings, and it's important that people understand that: that all of the technical facts and the human facts and the economic facts surrounding a waste management proposal will be considered at the environmental assessment hearing. I sense from some of the people I talk to across the province that they don't fully understand that that is the forum for the technical evidence to be presented, and that unless the proponent can prove that this particular alternative—say, for example, siting a dump, a landfill site—is the very best spot for a dump, then it won't happen. It's important, and I think the Ministry of Environment has a responsibility to try to explain that to people. I don't think they do that very well.

Thirdly, a major problem I see with respect to this particular government is its willingness to endorse the positions of what I would call the extreme environmental pressure groups and its refusal to look at all the available waste management alternatives. I think a government that does this, that ideologically selects certain particular systems and rules them out arbitrarily, is not serving the environment well. How do we know that some of these new technologies that are coming out are not indeed the best and most environmentally safe modes or ways of dealing with waste management if we don't undertake environmental assessment studies of these new technologies?

Of course, we have a government that doesn't look at it that way and refuses to give even a realistic impartial assessment of some of the technologies that are coming forward, such as energy from waste, which has been a proposal that's been put forward for a number of years; incineration; rail haul of Metro's garbage to Kirkland

Lake, which it refused to even look at. These are, in my view, realistic alternatives that should be studied. We don't have that at this time.

The third point we have that is not represented in this bill, which is a very important part of the waste management problem out there, is the lack of leadership by the Minister of Environment. The ministry's total budget is about \$429 million. I think it's most important that we look at the ability of the level of government to go ahead and suggest a preferred waste management system, and I think the provincial government is best suited to do that. If the minister were to provide more leadership than she—than he presently is doing—I keep thinking of the minister in the past tense. The new minister could gain a lot of credit by proceeding with a preferred waste management system that he could present to municipalities, and they could accept it in whole or in part depending on their specific needs. I would argue once again that the provincial Ministry of Environment and Energy is the only government body that has the resources to undertake that sort of process. Again, that would eliminate the absolute duplication of effort that's going on in some 46 jurisdictions across the province with respect to waste management master planning, to some degree.

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I have had a number of constituents in my area who are very, very interested in waste management issues and have been very helpful to me in terms of providing advice as to how I should approach the waste management issues in this House.

I met recently during the break with a gentleman by the name of Stuart Godwin of Elora. Mr Godwin is a former chemistry teacher at the secondary school level and he has given the waste management issue a great deal of study. He makes a very legitimate point in a letter which he has written recently to the Minister of Environment. I'll read it very briefly.

He talks about the environmental advantages of burning scrap tires in cement plants and saving coal from that particular use. "We see in the manufacture of cement in Ontario the necessity of burning some coal," and he has made a number of specific suggestions with respect to this issue, saying that there should be a test burn.

I'll quote again in part:

"I feel that in efforts to upgrade scrap tires, the minister is downgrading coal. We are storing tires where mosquitoes can breed, and guards are necessary to prevent malicious fires. At the same time, more coal must be obtained from under the ground or ravished from the land surface, with environmental consequences.

"I feel that incineration has its place under two very important conditions," and I would urge the government to listen to this, "that the energy is needed for power or

steam generation and that the fuel burns as cleanly as the other fuel it is displacing.”

So under those conditions, he is arguing, the incineration of waste tires should be considered. I certainly think he's got some good advice there for the minister if the minister has the foresight to take a good, impartial look at it.

The issue of rail haul to the north is still a very, very important issue for the government to look at. I was privileged to have the opportunity to be in Kirkland Lake in the summer of 1991, and I would encourage members this summer to take a bit of time to head up there. Some of them who have been there recently maybe know the situation very well; others in this House may have never been to Kirkland Lake.

The day I was there was a beautiful, sunny day. My wife and I were on the main street and I wanted to drop in and meet with some of the municipal officials to get a good feel for what they were proposing. I found that the level of inactivity in the town was absolutely stunning. There were literally dozens and dozens of people on the street with absolutely nothing to do. I spoke to some of the municipal officials, as I said, and they estimated that the unemployment rate was something in excess of 25%.

So we have a situation in a municipality where the economy is in an absolutely dismal state and it has come forward with a suggested alternative that the government should consider: to accept the waste from Metro, have it rail hauled to that community and store it in an environmentally acceptable place. I can't see why the government refuses to even allow an environmental assessment of that option. I think they're being totally remiss, because this is a legitimate option.

I spoke to the fellow who had actually done most of the work to create the proposal. His name was Don Caveen. He indicated to me that he felt it was just a matter of time. Eventually, the provincial government would come back to the town of Kirkland Lake requesting actually that the town accept Metro's garbage because of the problems that this government and the previous government have had in terms of siting a landfill in Metro Toronto.

About five years ago, there was a document produced by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture in cooperation with the University of Guelph called Waste Management for Rural Communities. It's an extensive document, very, very professional, including a number of specific suggestions as to what the government should be doing. I've kept it, because I think it's really, really good, and I would recommend it to all members who are concerned or interested in the issue.

It expresses very poignantly the concern that farmers have about losing their land, good quality farm land, and it being transferred into a garbage dump. I think the

farmers have a very legitimate concern in that respect. Certainly, this government in particular has made it increasingly difficult for anyone who wishes to develop agricultural land for residential use, but it has no problem with siting a landfill site on agricultural land. That is a real concern in rural Ontario.

This is an excellent document, which details many of the concerns of the federation of agriculture with respect to waste management. We also see in this document a suggestion that energy from waste should be considered as an alternative to the garbage problem. Again, to reiterate, I believe the government should be taking a good hard look at that.

In response to a question last week that I put to the Minister of Environment and Energy—who played a very important role in this debate even though he's not the lead minister; it's a Municipal Affairs bill—the minister gave a speech with respect to the environmental impact of the bill. I asked him a question about whether he felt it was desirable that the waste management responsibility would be transferred from the local municipality to the upper-tier municipality, the counties, with a simple majority instead of a two-thirds vote.

I expressed a concern that there might be in theory and there could be in practice a situation where some municipalities would gang up on a few and that there would be a difficult problem the government would have to deal with in that respect. He indicated at that time that it was an issue that should be dealt with at committee; at that time, I suppose, indicating that the government is prepared to send this bill to a standing committee of the Legislature for further review, discussion and clause-by-clause study.

I think that's absolutely essential. Because of the time line of this bill—that it was just introduced a couple of weeks ago and already we're into second reading debate—I don't think the general community out there realizes the importance of this bill and the impact that it will have in many, many ways. Certainly my view would be that it should go to a standing committee of the Legislature for further discussion, and that would be my objective here this afternoon.

I hope the government will listen to what I have said with respect to this bill and give all due consideration to my comments, and I appreciate the attention of the House this afternoon.

Mr Hayes: I want to compliment the member for Wellington, because he actually spoke about the bill, unlike the previous person from the official opposition.

There were a few things the member spoke about with the consultation. The thing is that there has been a considerable amount of consultation for a couple of years; as a matter of fact, for well over a year. There were hearings across the province. I believe it was something like 12 different locations that the Ministry

of Environment and also the Ministry of Municipal Affairs went to across the province.

The member also mentioned recycling, about it being very expensive. I don't think anyone really disagrees that it can be fairly expensive. As a matter of fact, that is why we are talking about reduction of waste. I think that's a very important issue here.

About the 50% plus one, I indicated in my opening remarks that we'd certainly be looking at amending that to make it two thirds. So those are a couple of the issues.

I think I'd really be remiss in not addressing a little bit about the previous speaker. He talked about mismanagement.

Mr Stockwell: Come on, he's out of order. This is questions and comments on the member for Wellington.

Mr Hayes: I'm relating to the other one, Mr Speaker. The member that's yapping now never relates to anything, so it's okay. To make it very, very brief, the one thing about this government in which it differs from the Liberal Party is that it does know the difference between a debt and a surplus.

Mr Stockwell: Come on, Pat, wake up, smell the coffee and sit down.

Mr Hayes: Mr Speaker, when you tell me to sit down, I will sit down. I will never sit down for someone like that, okay?

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The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Thank you. Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Dave Johnson: Perhaps in responding to the response, if that's possible, I'm just noting in the Hansard from May 4, 1993, last week during this same debate, and I'm not 100% sure of the context this was made in, but I'm quoting from the minister's statement at that point—

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member has to relate to the previous speaker who's just given a speech, if you could tie it all in.

Mr Dave Johnson: Right. Tying it all back in, because the member for Wellington has indicated about the participation of the private sector and participation of everyone involved in the program, the minister had indicated: "It's obvious to me that while we've had some participation from the private sector, it has not been as consistent or as widespread as perhaps it should be." This is a direct quote from the minister, noted in Hansard. That's probably why the member for Wellington has discussed participation; that comes from the minister himself.

The member for Wellington has also indicated that there should have been some statement with regard to markets. He used that situation in his speech. I think he's right. When I look, for example, at tires in the

province of Ontario, this is one of the major problems we face. There is a huge amount of money being generated through the tire tax, \$5 a tire. Some reckoning puts that at well over \$100 million that has been raised through the tire tax, yet very little of that money has gone into research. Some \$20 million, I think, at most has been committed, and a fraction of that has actually been spent. So here is another problem that has not been addressed in terms of Bill 7. Again, this is why we need further discussion on this whole matter.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): I just want to briefly make a couple of comments on the member opposite and his deliberations here this afternoon. He, in his presentation, talked about the whole question of the Adams mine proposal out in Kirkland Lake. I just want to put something clear here for the record.

One of the things that was going to happen with that particular proposal, should it have gone ahead—because the Liberals, yes, would have let it go ahead, and without an environmental assessment, I may add, because it was going to be done another way—is that it would basically promote an environment in which municipalities would be somewhat rewarded for taking their municipal waste out of their own boundaries and to be brought somewhere else: sort of out of sight, out of mind.

It is not to say that there may not have been some spinoff in doing that. I think everybody recognizes that certainly the ONR, the Ontario Northland Railway people, would have made some money transporting the garbage. There's no question that the municipality of Metro Toronto probably would have benefited somewhat in regard to the tipping fee issue, and also the community of Kirkland Lake probably would have gained something on the tax side. But overall, jobwise, the numbers were somewhat inflated.

But the point I want to make is that this whole legislation goes back to that whole very issue, which is that you need to give municipalities the tools, through legislation, in order to be able to allow them to deal with the question of dealing with waste within their own municipal boundaries. I see this legislation as tied to the previous bill around the Adams mine proposal, in terms of making sure that you deal locally with your municipal waste problem, as a comprehensive policy of saying that if we're going to deal, in the 1990s and the 2000s, with the whole question of municipal waste, we need to make sure that municipalities are well situated vis-à-vis legislation and regulation to have the powers to deal with all of the components around the question of municipal waste and how it is dealt with.

To take the position of advocating that we should have gone ahead with Kirkland Lake in regard to taking Metro's garbage and putting it in a hole somewhere in northern Ontario—it was an ill-thought-out idea and should have never been started in the beginning, and

this is a much better approach.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Stockwell: It's astounding that some members of the government caucus still don't even understand their own legislation, although sometimes it's not very difficult to believe. But they don't understand it.

The previous comment that was just made by the member for Cochrane South suggests that municipalities are rewarded for taking their garbage outside their own boundaries, and he enunciates Kirkland Lake. Well, think about this. Think about your legislation. Where is Metropolitan Toronto's garbage going—

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: You see, Mr Speaker, I understand why he doesn't understand. When people are explaining it to him, he's talking.

Where is Metropolitan Toronto's garbage going under your legislation? It's going outside Metropolitan Toronto to the region of York. So in fact, according to this, there is some reward at the end of the day for shipping your garbage to the region of York. The suggestion is that shipping it to York is okay but shipping it to Kirkland Lake isn't, although that's some kind of specific boundary laid down by the temporary government today, that will suggest that Metro's garbage going to a region over is okay, but when you go farther than that, it's not okay.

Further to that, the member stands up, blathering on about the importance of self-contained garbage disposal, and let's be clear that landfill sites, garbage disposal, should be self-contained. The member knows full well—and if he doesn't, again I'm not really shocked, but the member should know full well that upwards of a million tonnes are being shipped south of the border. So why is that good? It's not good, according to the NDP sandstone-written letters to the law that they suggested in the past about shipping garbage.

So let's get it straight. You can ship it to the neighbouring region, but not Kirkland Lake. You can't ship it down the street, but you can ship it to the United States. You can't landfill, but yes you can landfill. You can't incinerate unless you're shipping to the United States. Their policy is as mixed up as they are, for heaven's sakes.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Wellington has two minutes to respond.

Mr Arnott: I appreciate the additional two minutes to respond to the comments that my colleagues have made in response to my speech. To the member for Essex-Kent, I appreciate his kind comments about my presentation. Then, after complimenting me on sticking to the bill, he went and talked about the other opposition's speaker. But then the irony of that situation and the irony in this place don't surprise me any more.

The member for Don Mills and the member for Etobicoke West have raised important points as well, but the member for Cochrane South talked about the importance of giving municipalities the tools to deal with their waste management problem, the issue of ensuring that they have the tools to do the job. I think you can look at it that way, but you can also look at the need for the provincial government to provide leadership. When we hear this spurious argument from the government that you can't have one municipality's garbage going to another municipality—and it's already happening routinely, I guess—you wonder what the motivation is behind that policy. I don't entirely understand it.

I guess they believe that if a local municipality has to look after its own waste, that will be an incentive towards reduction of the waste stream. But I don't think it's just a direct correlation; there's an economic situation that comes into play. If it's more expensive for a municipality to ship it out, that will have an effect on the generation of the waste stream in that local municipality. It's not so much just having in your backyard; it's the actual cost of looking after the waste management responsibility that would have an impact on reducing the waste stream.

So I would encourage the government to really rethink its own thinking on this particular issue and look at it in a more open-minded way, because at the present time there are a number of examples where garbage is already shipped outside of local municipal boundaries, which flies in the face of the government's policy.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for his participation in the debate. Further debate? The honourable member for Brampton North.

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): I appreciate the opportunity to make a few brief comments, and indeed they will be relatively brief.

At the outset, I want to say, if you'll give me some latitude here, hi to Jim, who's watching, not our member for Durham West but another Jim; and Jim says hi to all his friends, in fact to both of his friends he says hi. Thank you, Mr Speaker. That will oblige him, something on a personal note that I'll tell you in private afterwards.

Bill 7 is a very serious matter because it impacts on something that affects people literally day to day. I just want to make a couple of very brief comments and relate to some of the comments made by other members and particularly some comments made by the parliamentary assistant, Mr Hayes, the member for Essex-Kent, in his opening remarks of 4 May.

As he began to get into the debate with respect to Bill 7, I wanted to draw to the attention of the members of this House and the people of the province of Ontario that the reference made to 50% reduction in waste by

the year 2000 is very interesting as it evolves and begins to develop. One of the issues at stake here, and we've tried to phrase this from time to time, is the sense that we have a moving target. I think you'll see where we're coming from thematically on that point of contention, because it seems that the government's target moves from time to time.

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When the former Minister of the Environment, Mr Bradley, introduced the objective that we have a 25% reduction by mid-decade and subsequently a 50% reduction by the end of the decade, the view was that we were going to go on base points or a benchmark point from the point of announcement. In fact, what we've done now is we've shifted gears and we're now talking about per capita reduction. The net result is that we're not even coming close to the 50% reduction. I think it's important that we understand that. I think it's very important that we get back on track and tell things as they are, that in fact we're going for 50% reduction and 50% of what. Are we talking per capita or absolute?

Clearly, the intent of the government under Mr Bradley's leadership was to move to 50% absolute reduction. We've slipped from that. That's fine if we revise our goals and revise our plans. All well and good, but let's be forthcoming and deal with that. I just wanted to deal with that as a point of departure and as much as my friend the member for Essex-Kent had mentioned that earlier on.

I'll come back to a second point that the member for Essex-Kent raised as really my concluding comment. One of the things that he raised in his comments as he spoke to the introduction of Bill 7 was the fact he said the government wanted to look at ways of a more appropriate financing so that the shift would move from the taxpayer to those who introduced the disposable products.

One of the concerns I have, and it comes back full circle to the debate we've engaged in over the past couple of years, is the meshing of our government's plans here in Ontario with the plans on a national basis. Indeed, as we compete in a world marketplace you will understand that under the leadership of the then Minister of the Environment from the province of Quebec, Clifford Lincoln, and the leadership of our government with Mr Bradley we moved towards something called the national packaging protocol and had set out a plan that would help us move across this country with legislation that was in harmony jurisdiction to jurisdiction and would also be discussed in the context of North American marketing realities.

My concern is when, in the context of debate in this House, we send signals to people that raise questions that create a little bit of uncertainty. In terms of private sector investment and where we're going with waste management, I think it's important that we have a game

plan, that we stick to that game plan and that if we are going to change that game plan in any major way, we do so with all the players involved. I think back again to the national packaging protocol: all ministers of the environment across this country, together with our federal colleagues, working in harmony so that we can do something that doesn't isolate Ontario and so that Ontario takes, and I think appropriately so, a leadership role but that we don't act out of sync, out of harmony with the rest of the country. I wanted to make passing reference to that.

The member for Don Mills, Mr Johnson, who really—and I noticed in Hansard that the Minister of Environment and Energy made reference to the fact that it was for all intents and purposes his maiden speech and presentation in the House. I might add as well congratulations to a job extremely well done, well researched and well backed up.

The member for Don Mills mentioned, of course, the state of OMMRI and where it's going. To come back to the protocol that has been pending, in the jargon OMMRI II, as it's been referred to within the environmental surplus at the Ministry of Environment, that has sat on the shelf. It's on again, off again and on again. Again, there is the whole concept of uncertainty and leadership so that the people and the 200 industries, 200-plus members, know where they're going, know what the expectations are, know what the funding formulas are, if there will be any funding formulas, so that they can deal with it. This is raised time and time again in debate. I just heard the member for Wellington talk about uncertainty in terms of funding. Uncertainty keeps people in a position where they're not prepared to invest.

Let me say that I've watched with interest and happiness, or at least a sense of, I don't know, satisfaction, for lack of a better word, that the government is beginning to change its tune in some regards with respect to the involvement of the private sector. It wasn't too long ago, in the summer of 1990, in the midst of a campaign, where the NDP said, "We don't believe in the involvement of the private sector," and issued a news release during August 1990. The then critic, the former first Minister of the Environment under the NDP, the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, said that in order to "ensure integrity in waste management systems, it was important that it be run in the public sector," words to that effect; to ensure integrity requires the public sector.

I'm delighted that the government has now begun to change its tune, and I notice the member for Essex-Kent said: "We've been talking to the private sector. We're concerned about their involvement and we're listening to them and we want to consult with them and we've talked to the Ontario Waste Management Association and we recognize that they have an important role to

play and that they are partners in this." I'm delighted that the government has begun to change its tune and change its direction in that regard. I think it's important that that happen.

Obviously, there are so many areas where the government ought to stay out of the way and let the private sector do the job, and it can be done. The role of the government is appropriately to set the framework, to have the regulatory scheme within which the private sector can operate, and operate with a sense of certainty and the freedom to do that job that it wants to do.

Again I refer to the comments—and I want to reiterate them because I think they're so very succinctly summed up—by the member for Don Mills in his first speech in this place. He talked about the essential failings, if you will, or at least question marks. I think "failing" is perhaps too pejorative, because I want to come back to a comment made by the member for Essex-Kent. He said there are some jurisdictional concerns. Indeed there are jurisdictional concerns in terms of the upper-tier, lower-tier governments.

I think of the situation where I live. I know my colleague the critic from Mississauga North has reflected on that particular matter with specific reference to Peel and the makeup of Caledon council, Brampton council and Mississauga council and how those dynamics could perhaps play to the disadvantage of one municipality against another. I thank the member for Essex-Kent, who has recognized that as an issue that needs to be addressed and needs to have some clarity brought to it and has said that they will certainly consider the refining of the legislation and, as it goes to committee or out for further consultation after second reading, that issue will be addressed.

But I want to raise it again and I notice the member for Essex-Kent is acknowledging the fact that he is picking up on that, because it's an area that will potentially—I don't want to say it "will" impact the community that I represent—have an impact in the community that I represent, perhaps adversely, perhaps not; one never knows. But I think that to craft the language in such a way as to make it a bit more certain where we have those upper-tier, lower-tier jurisdictional matters on the table will be useful for everybody concerned.

The costing issue keeps being brought up. There's some reference made, and the minister, the Honourable Mr Wildman, made some reference to regulations that were passed just prior to the introduction, I guess, the last—or brought forward by the government, related to Bill 143 and indicated the interplay of the regulations will be forthcoming under part IV of Bill 143, and Bill 7, as the vehicle that provides municipalities the legislative framework to enact the regs under Bill 143, to have compliance to make the fit, if you will, to enable the municipalities to do their job and to meet the requirements.

Again, I have a concern just from a management

point of view, if you will, not to beat this to death but simply to say that those regulations were to have been brought forward a year ago, or near the end of last year; then it was postponed to December of 1992 and then it was January of 1993 and here we are into May, late April, and they're here now in their at least proposed form. I guess the difficulty that I have is this. The private sector is saying, "We're going to have to implement these." Municipalities are saying: "We're going to have to implement them. The legislation for implementing the regulations is coming, giving us the authority to do it, but we're not really sure, in terms of the finality of those regs," in other words, the flow of what's happening, the cart before the horse, if you will.

Let's get our things lined up in a business-like fashion. Here are the regs. Here's what you will be dealing with. Here's the legislation that gives you the tools to deal with the regs. What we have here is the legislation evolving concurrently with the regs and people not knowing exactly how it's going to unfold; hence the issue of costing. It's up in the air and nobody needs to tell any one of the 130 members in this House that the issue of costing and the impact on the tax base is of paramount importance to everything that we do.

Let me come full circle to something I said earlier, implicitly. There are a lot of things that the private sector can do and ought to have the latitude to do because it can do it as well, and in most cases better, than the public sector, and waste management is an area that I say, with the greatest respect to a number of private-public sector initiatives—I'm proud of some of the things that my friend Mr Bradley did, but in many cases the private sector has been far ahead of us, and I think we have to recognize that.

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We have to give them credit where credit is due and let them move ahead and be innovative, be creative, get into the marketplace and seize the environmental opportunities and invest their capital, give the sense of certainty so that they can go to their shareholders and say, "We have a game plan within the legislative framework, the regulatory framework, in the province of Ontario that we can come to you as shareholders and lay out a business plan for investment over the next five, 10 years and make our businesses viable and make them work."

But surely that requires a sense of order, and if we want businesses to operate in that fashion—and they must operate in that fashion in terms of their accountability—government has a responsibility to lay out with certainty, in a systematic, well-thought-out fashion what the rules are and the framework within which business must operate.

Let me come full circle, then, to the opening comments of my friend the member for Essex-Kent. He had mentioned early on that there were some considerations

that the OWMA had with particular reference to the viability and the certainty of the private sector's involvement and long-term viability.

We had this debate on Bill 143. I might add parenthetically that we brought forward 14 amendments that were brought forward by the private sector, which said that would give them a sense of certainty and would help them overcome some of the misgivings they had at that time. I guess you can understand why they're a little bit leery now, because during the debate of Bill 143 they said, "We want to help you with this where we are in particular agreement with you." There wasn't a whole lot of agreement, to be candid. There certainly wasn't the spirit of general support as there is attached to this particular bill, Bill 7.

In the context of Bill 143, they said: "Okay, we might not be happy with what's happening here, but given that, here are some amendments we need, or we would certainly like to have. Some of them we feel we need, to have that certainty over the long haul, and we'll bring forward 14 of them in the final analysis. There's more that we would like to have, but realistically, there are 14 that we think are good, solid amendments and we're not going to extend our wish list beyond reason." At the end of the day they got not one of those amendments—not a single one.

They heard the government say in committee and they heard the minister say: "We're beginning to change our tune. We want the private sector's involvement, notwithstanding the fact that previously we had said we don't want them. Now we think that maybe we can use them as partners, and we think we're beginning to understand that maybe they play an important role."

Now the Premier's running around the province saying, "Hey, look, I talk to private sector and business people every day." We're glad you do. Maybe it's too little too late in terms of that recognition, I say to my friends opposite. But the fact of the matter is you've recognized, at least philosophically had a shift, and you said you want at least in some sense, at least if not just simply pay lipservice, in some real sense have some interaction with the private sector.

That tune, I might add, historically began to change in terms of waste management in and around the debate on Bill 143. The government said: "Talk to us. Give us your suggestions. Help us help you." The private sector came and said, "Here are 14 ways with reference to that legislation you could help us," and they got nothing to show for it.

Now we're into Bill 7. The member for Essex-Kent is a genuine, honest individual, a hard-working, dedicated guy. I mean that in all sincerity. He stands on behalf of his caucus and colleagues and his minister and says: "We want to listen. We know there are concerns. We're going to address them."

You can understand why there's a little bit of uncertainty out there because, "We've heard that tune before," say my friends in the private sector, and particularly from the Ontario Waste Management Association.

At the risk of, as I say, flogging a dead horse, I say to my friend from Essex-Kent, Mr Hayes, it's all well and good to say you're going to do it. We're hoping that this time in fact you deliver and come forward, specifically with reference to section 281. You know what we need to do. We need to be a little bit more specific in terms of the definition of what is a waste management system. Let's get the public aspect of that defined very clearly.

On the exemptions in section 209, and he knows of what I speak, get that broadened to allow the facilities that are going to operate under the permit-by-rule regulations to run. They were introduced on April 29, 1993, those regs, and five, six days later we have Bill 7. So we have the draft regs coming April 29, the legislation on May 4, and they're not entirely in harmony in sending the message to the private sector in the certainty that they require. Those are two of the issues that I think are illustrative of the problem that some people have with Bill 7.

I think I speak for most, if not all, of my colleagues on this side of the House, that we are in accord with the spirit and the intent of what you want to do. Nobody takes issue with that as far as I can tell. But the questions that remain unanswered I think need to be addressed, and I think we have to have some concrete answers to them. I don't think in this day and age it's acceptable any more to say, "Trust us, we're going to work it out." To be quite frank, you don't have the latitude financially to do that.

I think, in terms of the dependence, that we need to do the job in partnership with the broad community, with women and men across this province who want to participate in a meaningful way in waste management, with women and men who serve on town councils, on city councils, regional councils and say, "We want to do the job for our taxpayers and, moreover, do it for the environment that we will leave for our children, a responsibility that we accept as people to do the job as best we're able." They need the tools and they need the certainty to be able to do that.

I would simply say in conclusion that as my friend the parliamentary assistant is listening to some of us speak from time to time, I hope he would go to his colleague the minister, to legislative staff, to the staff within the ministry, and say: "Let's nail these things down with a sense of certainty. Here's an opportunity for us to do the job and not only do it, but do it extremely well."

You have an opportunity to close the loop, if you will, to make the words and the music mesh, to send a

message with certainty to the private sector: "Yes, not only do you belong but you're welcome here and we're going to give you the tools that you need to be viable, to be certain, to be able to justify your investment and your long-term involvement in the economy in the waste management agenda of all the people of this province."

Mr Speaker, thank you for your indulgence and the opportunity to share for a few moments in this important debate. I look forward to any comments forthcoming from my colleagues.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mr Dave Johnson: The member for Brampton North has talked about the finances involved with the waste management system, and I might say that's one of the problems we've had with regard to this whole issue. I can tell you that here in Metropolitan Toronto, just for one example, up until the last couple of years Metropolitan Toronto was achieving a great amount of financial revenue from the tipping fees going into the landfill sites. The tipping fees revenue, of course, has gone way down because the waste is going to the south.

It's quite interesting that waste is permitted to go to the United States to places like Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York. It's permitted to be incinerated and it's permitted to be landfilled at great distances from the province of Ontario, and yet it's not permitted to go to a place like Kirkland Lake. We're not permitted to look at incineration as part of this whole package. Incineration is not on the agenda, Kirkland Lake is not on the agenda, and yet the waste is going to the south.

As a result of the waste going far away to the south, many, many miles, the revenue has come down and Metropolitan Toronto no longer has revenue coming in to pay for the blue box system. As a result, a lot of pressure is being placed on the regional municipality and on the local municipalities, and what is becoming apparent through this whole scheme is that the cost is going to find its way to the local municipalities. I imagine this is the problem that the member for Brampton North is addressing.

The local municipalities, municipalities like North York—Mayor Lastman of North York is extremely concerned about this whole process because he sees about \$5 million to \$10 million being put on the taxpayers of the city of North York through this process, and this is something that the municipalities are not going to be able to live with.

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The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Wellington.

Mr Arnott: I'm pleased to rise and extend a few comments to the member for Brampton North's presentation. I remember the member for Brampton North, while a part of the Liberal government caucus, was the

Minister of the Environment's parliamentary assistant. So he brings a considerable degree of experience, I think, as was evident by his presentation, getting into some of the technical issues surrounding this bill.

I think it is important that the government consider the points that he made, certainly the issues surrounding the cost of waste management. This bill brings in a number of changes with respect to recycling. It's a continuing concern as to who will be paying for the cost of the recycling programs in Ontario.

When the bill is silent on those issues and we see the government moving forward with disentanglement and you see that this bill will give all of the responsibility to municipalities for recycling responsibility, in all likelihood we'll be seeing the local property taxpayer again being downloaded upon and picking up the cost of the program.

That's a very, very real concern, especially in a time when we have seen in the last couple of weeks the Treasurer's fiscal statement indicating the cuts in grants to almost every one of the provincial government's partners, especially municipalities, where their unconditional grants will be cut, and we don't know the extent to which other grants may be cut. The Minister of Transportation, I'm sure, will enlighten us at some point in the next few months as to what the situation will be with respect to the possibility of supplementary funding, which is very, very important to rural municipalities.

You have to assume that, again, municipalities are going to be carrying the cost of the provincial government's objectives for waste management, and that is an issue of continuing concern in municipal government and among local taxpayers. It's a real issue, and hopefully the government will consider the points that are being made during the course of this debate, which I think are very, very high-quality presentations from the opposition side.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I found the presentation of the member for Brampton North both interesting and informative. When we realize the mounting costs of recycling, of course, there is great concern by the municipalities, and rightly so, and I was pleased that the member for Brampton North mentioned the national packaging protocol, because, after all, I think that probably the secret to the whole garbage question is to reduce. We need to do a lot more of that in the case, also, of reusing. There needs to be much more reuse, and, indeed, limit recycling only because the materials that we're using can be reused. I think there needs to be a great deal more consideration given to those aspects.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments. If not, the honourable member has two

minutes to give a response.

Mr McClelland: I'll just make two points very quickly. One, I want to reiterate the point that I think we need to have certainty. I hope that that certainty will be addressed sooner rather than later so that the private sector, again, has the sense that it can be here, and be here for the long term, and provide the very, very valuable service that it does.

I think it's important to note in the general context of small business, we all understand that the waste management industry is a great example of small business in this province, and all of us in this place know the statistical data that are available that show us the importance of small business in the economic vitality of this province.

The Ontario Waste Management Association membership is no exception to that and in fact has put literally millions and millions of dollars into the economy. We cannot afford to lose them economically; we cannot afford to lose them as good corporate citizens, and in most cases they provide excellent leadership on the environmental agenda.

The community that I represent in Brampton North, like many of its neighbours, is really feeling it in terms of its municipal tax base. We have a growing community. The member for Peterborough isn't here, but my community of Brampton North will this year alone grow by the same number of residents as are in her community. We're growing at about 36,000 per year in the community of Brampton North; 36,000 new individuals.

You can imagine the strain that that's putting on the housing tax base, the residential tax base, in light of the infrastructure requirements in my community. We can ill afford to have a noble and good program shifted down in terms of the financing when we can't afford it, and end up doing something poorly that could be done well, or not doing it at all for lack of the resources to do it.

So, as the member for Wellington has so very well put in the more time that he addressed that, let's deal with the financing issue again. Let's nail that down so we can proceed with certainty and a sense of direction and the resources we need to make it work.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for his participation in the debate. Further debate? The honourable member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: I take great pleasure in entering into this particular debate on this legislation, Bill 7. I do take great pleasure. I think probably I would have had more pleasure if this piece of legislation were introduced in, oh, September/October 1990, November/December 1990, maybe early in 1991, because at that time we were still of the belief that this government had some principles and integrity and believed in what they said in opposition. Today—

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): We know better.

Mr Stockwell: Today we certainly know better. The member for York Mills says it best: "We know better." We're becoming accustomed to the daily retractions, denials, retreats on sundry issues, but not the least of which is landfill sites, waste disposal and the 3Rs: retract, recant and resign.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): Garbage, garbage.

Mr Stockwell: Garbage. Garbage and dumps.

What this particular party had in the past was they had the market cornered on the answers to the landfill issue. They had the market cornered because they had all the answers. Of course, when you have all the answers, it's easy to corner the market.

Subsequent to being elected government, it was very apparent, it became very clear, that not only did they not have all the answers; they didn't have any of the answers. They had no idea exactly which way they were heading, in what direction they were moving. And they succeeded where other governments couldn't. They succeeded in upsetting not just local municipalities; they succeeded in upsetting a municipality that wanted a landfill site, which in my opinion was nearly impossible to do, but this government in fact succeeded at that. To the only municipality in all of the province of Ontario which in fact welcomed as a willing host—I think the Liberals called it a willing host—the landfill site, this government did the impossible and said no and upset a local municipality which was in favour of receiving a landfill site. So today I think we're a little more cynical, a little more practised in the art of reminding this government of exactly how far it has fallen. And, boy, they have fallen on the landfill.

At first it was the minister from Etobicoke-Lakeshore who gave us the waste authority, and the waste authority was a group of people who got together and succeeded in completely screwing up the entire process. They did this—not quickly, mind you; it took them about a year—at the expense of the taxpayers to the tune of \$25 million to \$40 million.

So they have now probably written off the political career of every member who's ever come out of Durham for the New Democrats. They've probably written off the career of anyone who had any hope of resurrecting theirs in the region of York. And if they had any sitting members in the region of Peel, they would have written their careers off, but since they don't have any, that isn't the case.

They've upset everyone in northern Ontario in the area of Kirkland Lake, although they still insist that they did a recent poll, done by your favourite left-wing-leaning association, that says the people really don't want it regardless of what that private sector poll that was taken said.

They had a noble and probably a prosperous goal for this province. They suggested that in whole numbers we should recycle 50% of the waste. That was a noble goal—completely impossible to succeed at, but a noble goal. So when it became very apparent to the then minister from Etobicoke-Lakeshore that they were not going to succeed in diverting 50% of landfill sites, what did they do? Did they adjust their future opportunities? Did they realign their policies? Did they re-evaluate the situation? Well, no. What this government did was they changed the rules, and what the rules change meant was that rather than 50% of diversion, or whole numbers, it became 50% per capita, which means significantly less landfill was diverted or reduced. They just changed the numbers so they reach 50%.

So it's much like being in a football game and it's third down and 40 yards to go at the mid-field stripe. Well, it was third down and 40 yards to go at the mid-field stripe, and the minister stood up and said, "Okay, the goalposts now move from the zero yard line to the 35, so we're a lot closer to scoring the touchdown." That's exactly what this government did when it came to recycling, reducing and reusing.

1700

Having said that, we now get to this piece of legislation. This is a really interesting piece of legislation. I recall, as a member of Metropolitan Toronto, the great length this government would go to in explaining to the then Liberal government—and I don't think they were all wrong; I think even the Liberals to this day would accept some responsibility—the fact that you can't download on municipalities. It was a good idea.

Municipalities only have one way to collect money and that's through property tax assessment. I'm certain that probably 50% of the members opposite understand that. They can only collect it through property tax. It's a regressive tax. It's not based at all on the ability to pay. It's not based at all on how much money you make or how much money you will make or anything along those lines; it's just based on how much your house is worth—very regressive.

In opposition I will say that they were very specific in their opposition to the downloading that the then Liberal government was taking. If you read this piece of legislation, Bill 7, they seem to have come to the conclusion that downloading is now a really good idea, because this is all this legislation is. When you come down to the short strokes on Bill 7, when you get down to the bottom line on this piece of legislation, what is it in this piece of legislation that this government wants to see passed? What it wants to see passed is a responsibility for the blue box and the diversion and the recycling, that all that cost be passed off to the municipalities.

Now this government, which in opposition was clear, is leaving the blue box program and the entire recycling program in a very precarious situation. I will say in this

House today that I believe that if this piece of legislation is passed, if this legislation is enacted and if this legislation is forced upon regional governments and municipal governments and county governments, the blue box program, the recycling program, will be in major jeopardy of collapsing around itself in two or three years.

Why do I say that? I say that because this is the same government whose social contract is going to pass on reductions of \$500 million to municipalities. Local municipalities such as the regional government in Toronto, Metropolitan Toronto, are looking at reductions of \$85 million to \$100 million in transfer payments. That doesn't even deal with disentanglement, which is going to be even more money. There's not going to be a nickel left over to try to maintain or expand on recycling projects. This doesn't come from just this party; this doesn't come from just the Liberal Party; this comes from the people who have to make ends meet in local government, the local mayors and councils, regional councils and county councils in this province.

This province's recycling program, if this is adopted, is in very serious jeopardy of collapsing around itself. Why? There's not as much money in the landfill issue today as there was two, three and four years ago. I don't think anyone here will even remark when I suggest to you that the moneys available to local councils from moneys they generated from tipping fees is significantly down. Why is it down? For the same reason it's down and they take credit for recycling as being up. It's not up. The same reason that tipping fee is down, because there's a recession and a lot of companies aren't operating today. If companies aren't operating today, they don't produce waste, garbage. There's not that byproduct. They don't have to take that garbage to the dumps, pay the tipping fees to local municipalities, which put it into reserve accounts and spend looking for other landfill sites. That's the first and foremost.

Secondly, because this government has been so hypocritical on the issue of landfill sites and dumps and where you can put them and who can move the garbage that there's a significant amount of revenue leaving this province for the United States. This is not news; this is something that's been happening for the last few years. The member for Don Mills outlined at length the number of landfill sites in the northern United States where the garbage from Metropolitan Toronto and surrounding areas is going. Why is it going there? Because their tipping fees are significantly lower than the municipal tipping fees in the greater Toronto area.

At the same time, where the hypocrisy comes in is that this government will not allow Metropolitan Toronto to pursue and study, through environmental processes, the feasibility of opening up a landfill site in Kirkland Lake, because it doesn't believe regional governments should be shipping their garbage elsewhere

except in the boundaries that are confined to their local jurisdiction, except of course if you're the region of York which is right beside Metropolitan Toronto and then you could ship your garbage to the region of York; and except of course if you're going to ship your garbage south to the United States, and that's not okay; and of course except if you're incinerating it. If you ship it to the United States, they incinerate the garbage, the plume goes up in the air and the acid rain comes back towards Canada.

Interjection: Kingston's shipping it to Ottawa.

Mr Stockwell: Kingston's shipping it to Ottawa.

This is a hodgepodge of stupidity. This is a hodgepodge of ill-conceived, poorly planned, badly thought out policy by a government which is caught up in the idea of opposition. So to suggest it's hypocrisy is one thing. I think frankly it's long past hypocrisy. It is bordering on stupidity, their attitude towards landfill, garbage and dumps.

You won't see me get excited today about their particular piece of legislation, Bill 7, because I've come to expect this from this government. I've come to expect legislation that's poorly planned, ill conceived and badly flawed. I've grown to accept it. I've grown to accept the fact that on a usually bi-weekly basis they'll contradict something they said a few short weeks ago. I've grown to accept the fact that they're not going to reach their recycling objectives so they simply change the targets.

I've grown to accept the fact that they consider moving garbage from region to region is not acceptable unless you happen to be Metropolitan Toronto and can move it to the region of York. I've grown to accept the fact that they're going to ignore all the landfill that's going to the United States simply because they choose to ignore it, not for any environmentally sound reason.

I've chosen to accept the fact that they have no idea what they're doing any more when it comes to landfill, dumps, recycling etc. I've chosen to accept the fact that municipalities are fed up with this government, fed up with its attitude to landfills, fed up with its attitude to dumps, fed up with its social contract, fed up with disentanglement, and they're not going to cooperate any more.

I've grown to accept that fact that every so often they bring in a piece of legislation that they insist on pushing through that insists another body, another group shoulder the responsibilities that they were elected to absorb. Local municipalities are now going to have to shoulder the responsibility of the blue box program. Since they can't, it's going to close up.

There's the old saying that, "The buck stops here." I swear, in every minister's office of this government, there must be a sign on each of the desks, "The buck stops anywhere but here," because there is no responsi-

bility and no reasoned argument as to why this piece of legislation is introduced today.

They have given no reasoned argument to the local municipalities about why they should accept responsibility for the incurred costs—and they will be dramatic—of recycling and how they're going to make those ends meet besides hiking taxes to the local taxpayer who can ill afford any kind of tax hike, always in the same breath as telling them they're going to have half a billion dollars in costs for a social contract and additional untold millions, hundreds of millions for disentanglement.

So there's where we're at today. It was a brief description of the history of this government, its flip-flops and so on with respect to this specific issue.

1710

As an alternative party, we've offered our position on a lot of issues, and our position on this issue has also been enunciated in the past and again today. We understand there are some municipalities that are in a crisis when it comes to landfill. They say landfill; I call them dumps. They call it waste; I call it garbage. There are some municipalities that have a garbage crisis today. Maybe it's less of an impact today because of the recession and they're not producing as much garbage, but when and if, under this government, this recession ever ends—I'm not holding my breath—they're going to be in the same situation that they were a few short years ago, because they haven't resolved the issue. Metropolitan Toronto still has problems with long-term landfill sites, and it's not just Metropolitan Toronto. I can think of Kingston, Orillia, Ottawa, Guelph, Midland. There's a lot of municipalities out there with some serious landfill issues that they must address, and when this recession ends and garbage soars again, they're going to be in the same situation.

A comprehensive review may be too late, because this government did the worst thing it could have done when it got elected. They simply abolished everything that was done in the past and decided to start over again. So we're no further ahead today than they would have been had they accepted responsibility for what had taken place in September 1990. We've just taken to today to get up to speed. We're still looking for a series of dumps in Metropolitan Toronto and the list is no shorter than the list was in September 1990, except now they've got a whole bunch of communities mad at them because none of those communities want the dump site.

And in September 1990 there was a willing host, and a study was being done to check out the environmental feasibility of opening the Kirkland Lake site. As well as going with the Kirkland Lake site, a significant portion of the money spent by Metropolitan Toronto taxpayers, now being absorbed by provincial taxpayers, was going to be spent on a recycling program, a recycling program that would be self-contained and deal with a lot of the

recyclable goods that were being produced not only in Metropolitan Toronto but those goods that were being produced further north in Kirkland Lake itself and so on. It seemed like a natural route to go.

At no time in that period when they were talking about the blue box program did anyone tell the local municipalities, "In some few short years, you'll be thoroughly and totally responsible for all blue box programs and therefore you're going to have to accept the costs." And nobody told them either that the provincial government would come in and threaten to rob their landfill reserve account if it wasn't used up.

So alternatives are clear, in my opinion. The Kirkland Lake site must be addressed. You must address the Kirkland Lake site for two reasons: One, you're going to be into a crisis in a few short years, and two, from a handling point of view and a blue box point of view, it seems to make some reasoned sense. Plus, the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and the local municipal officials in Kirkland Lake were prepared to make a deal. It was important that that deal be consummated, because the same issue is going to face Kingston, Ottawa, Guelph, Orillia, Midland etc, etc, etc.

Now, how do we deal with the blue box program? Well, my fear is that in a few short years you won't have to deal with the blue box program, because I know that when municipalities like North York and Etobicoke and East York and so on and so on and so on begin to realize the capital costs and the operating costs of paying for a curbside blue box at-source program, they're going to opt out. I think they've pretty much made that clear. In North York, I think the figure was something in the neighbourhood of \$10 million, \$5 million to \$10 million in the city of North York to absorb these costs, according to this piece of legislation that is being passed through. That's \$5 million to \$10 million additional to the taxpayers of North York if this particular program is adopted. Who can pick up that cost? The regional government? Metropolitan Toronto isn't prepared to pay additional money for recycling. The provincial government? The provincial government's the last state.

So in essence, in my opinion, if this piece of legislation is adopted and passed on to local municipalities, you'll see the municipalities revolt. The local municipalities will say, "We don't want to be a party to this." And I don't care what AMO says, because I don't think AMO really represents the cross-section broad view of local municipalities.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Now, now.

Mr Stockwell: I don't believe it does. I think it's dominated, in some cases, by like-minded hypocrites. When these particular people come forward and tell me categorically that AMO accepts this Bill 7, that it understands this piece of legislation and buys into it, I don't believe that, from a local municipal point of view. I do not believe that.

I also know full well that in one answer to a question the minister here talking about disentanglement said he had a signed contract from AMO. I don't think there's a deal on disentanglement either. If there is, I don't think AMO represents the broad cross-section of views of the local municipalities.

You can correct me if I'm wrong, but I can't find too many municipal officials who buy into this piece of legislation and are prepared to absorb the costs that go along with it. Now, unless my Liberal friends or government friends can direct me elsewhere, I've not met that municipal official who is going to absorb costs for a recycling program for the local municipality. I've not met that individual elected.

So I think that is a major red herring used by this government to direct debate on this piece of legislation, because I don't believe that fundamental principle you hang on, that fundamental agreement that you believe you have, is a broad cross-section, widely held view within the municipal world.

Again, if it can be proven otherwise, I'll eat my words. But quite frankly, of all the municipalities that I've spoken to, I can't find one in agreement with this piece of legislation, not one, and I'll be shocked if we find one, because the cost is going to be, I think, insurmountable.

In conclusion, I think this government had better rethink its position on this piece of legislation. I think it has to rethink its position on this piece of legislation for not only one reason, but one reason specifically: the financing of the blue box, landfill, recycling programs. I think they're going to have to rethink it, because if they don't, the system will collapse and break down, and no one will be served when that happens. The municipalities won't be served, the regional governments won't be served and the provincial government will not be served. You'll only put forward a piece of legislation that is so onerous and difficult to local municipalities that they will basically buckle underneath the financial cost.

This is nothing new. This is a typical about-face flip-flop by a government on an issue that it claims to hold so dearly to its heart, another flip-flop. It's a flip-flop like auto insurance was a flip-flop. It's a broken promise like Sunday shopping was a broken promise. It's a broken promise like casino gambling was a broken promise. It just fits in perfectly with the endless list of broken promises.

I said as a joke one day in this House that we should have a committee of broken promises, but it would be the busiest committee in this Legislature: Practically every bill would be referred to the committee of broken promises. This one would fit that very nicely, because once again this government has mouthed the platitudes on this side of the House and proven beyond a shadow of a doubt on that side of the House that it is incapable

of governing, whether it comes to casino gambling, whether it comes to the finances of this province, when it comes to the landfill issue and the recycling program. This piece of legislation, if adopted, will certainly mean the end of the recycling program and the blue box program within two or three years in this province. Mark my words.

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): I think my honourable friend the member for Etobicoke West is absolutely right: The cost is number one. The program, Bill 7, might be acceptable to some, but most municipalities, especially with the introduction of the disentanglement program, are asking themselves who will pay for the additional burden of the cost of waste management. I think every municipality in this province wants to cooperate with the provincial government.

Last week I attended FONOM in New Liskeard, and it was the top subject of many mayors and councillors throughout the province of Ontario. When we talk today, 1993, about Bill 7, waste management and the environment, you would think that these two things have recently opened our eyes, recently happened. But this has been a long debate in this House.

I want to tell you that I don't know what previous governments did in the past about waste management, but I can tell you that when this government was in power under the leadership of the former Minister of the Environment—he just came in the House—we started these programs with the intention of working with municipalities. This is not happening today. I don't know why the government is consulting with our 834 municipalities, because any time it brings in new legislation, it's upsetting 834 municipalities. Whom are they negotiating with? We have to resolve this.

1720

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Simcoe East.

Mr McLean: I just wanted to comment briefly on the remarks made by the member for Etobicoke West.

The parliamentary assistant to the minister is here today, and I think he has some questions that should be answered—the answer he has got from the member who just spoke. What I'm looking for from the government are the answers to some of the questions that he asked. I want to know if downloading and the blue boxes turned over to the regions and counties is a fact. Are you going to do that? Is that why the amendments to Bill 208, which is Bill 7, amending it—is that what that bill is going to do? Is this bill now going to transfer the cost to the local municipalities? If it is, how about telling us?

The other major point that was made had to do with regard to the municipalities where they have only one tax base, as the member so distinctly said—one tax base

only. Are they going to be downloaded on to the counties and regions, as said?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): There's only one taxpayer.

Mr McLean: That's right, but you don't understand the difference between how the municipalities get their tax money and how you do. That's why you're over there, and you have no idea about financing in this province of Ontario, because there's sales tax, gas tax, transportation tax—as a matter of fact, you collect more taxes for your Ministry of Transportation than the whole ministry spends, more gas tax and fuel tax than you spend on roads. So don't talk to me about whether we know what we're talking about or not.

The member's very clear with what he was saying, because he knows that it's another downloading on to the local municipalities, and it's happening. So there you are.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Essex-Kent.

Mr Hayes: No, the intent of this legislation is not to download on municipalities at all; the intent of this legislation is to give municipalities the powers that they have been long asking for, so they could have their own 3R programs to reduce the amount of waste that is going into landfill sites in this province.

The Acting Speaker: Final participant, the honourable member for St Catharines.

Mr Bradley: I always enjoy the participation of the member for Etobicoke West, who succinctly puts his point in a non-bombastic and quiet way to the House. I would just like to direct a few questions to him, discounting what the polls are saying these days and remembering that the enemy is still on the other side.

I would like to know if he has heard from the environment groups that used to almost daily be speaking to the news media about environmental issues, and particularly waste management issues. I'd like to know if, as the member for Etobicoke West, he has been receiving those representations, whether he's aware of any press conferences that have been held at Queen's Park or elsewhere to denounce the lack of action on the part of this government for such a long period of time dealing with environmental issues.

Second, I would like to know if he has been able to find an environmental writer left in the province of Ontario who actually deals with these issues, or whether he's aware, when any questions have been asked in this Legislature, whether Radio Noon has followed up on these to determine whether something the government is doing is wrong, or whether it has decided that trying to determine the identification of a bird by the noise it makes or what a first prom date was like has taken precedence over the environmental issues.

Third, I would like to know, as a former municipal

councillor, just given the preference of two governments—not his own; he may have a better solution in his mind—but given the solution offered to the waste management problems of this province by the previous government and minister and by the present governments and ministers, which, if he had to make that tough choice between those two, he would select at this moment in time with the caveat that he can find a further solution himself.

Last, does he well recall the speeches that New Democrats across this province made about environmental issues and the level of anticipation they raised among people concerned about the environment, about what they would do to solve all of the problems of this province, and is he satisfied that indeed they have been solved to this point in time?

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. This completes the time allotted for questions and/or comments. The member for Etobicoke West has two minutes in response.

Mr Stockwell: I thank the member for Simcoe for the comments he made. As far as the government member who's offered his conclusion that this was not how it was designed: Better come to earth. This is exactly what's happening. The costs are being passed on. It's called downloading. If you can't understand that, then you've obviously not read the written submissions that have been dealt with.

To the Minister of Transportation, we can't get you to answer a question during question period; why are you so forthcoming now?

To the member for St Catharines, I wrote his questions down because I always find that he is a non-bombastic member and I always like his very unparochial, close-to-the-heart questions he asks that never have anything to do with a hospital or a CAT scan in St Catharines.

So I'll respond in order. No representations from Pollution Probe and so on and so forth: I do find that rather astounding, considering the fact that those particular groups were one of the great forces that felt this government would be the greatest government since sliced bread. It didn't seem to work out that way. I'm constantly astounded that during these announcements, when they back off and reel from particular positions, we don't hear from those groups any more, and gosh, I'm beginning to miss them. I never thought I'd say that.

The next one, about environmental writers: They've left. They've gone to Washington. They're enamoured with Bill Clinton.

Radio Noon is now taking its segue from NDP morning. It's now Radio Noon that follows. They're thinking that the proms etc are more important than environmental concerns, which I also find rather astounding.

Waste management choice: which government would I choose? I think Davis led a fine government on environment. Specifically on the environment, it's rather curious that all the left-wing, social saviours of environment have apparently vacated this province once the NDP was elected—not a peep out of these people who were saving our souls from the dangers of other governments, and this may be the worst environmental nightmare before my eyes.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I just want to make it clear up front that I'm standing to oppose any dump in my riding. During the by-election, when I canvassed every door in my riding, I must say that I heard no request for a dump in the riding. I just wanted to pass that on to the member for Essex-Kent.

However, I did hear quite a bit about people saying they couldn't understand why this government had taken the position on dumps that it did. They thought Kirkland Lake was a fine solution, one to be considered and couldn't understand why this government wasn't considering it.

I think what we see in this bill and other related issues is that lack of a reasoned and considered way to approach these issues. I think there's a bit of a "catch as catch can" in this bill, and I think the 3Rs are something of course we all support, but I think often it's chanted as a mantra to lull us into a certain stupefaction and to pass pretty well anything that has its imprimatur on it before we consider it fully. That's why I think, in respect of this bill, that we certainly need to hear from the public.

I know that many members of my party have stood up and said that public hearings are necessary. I know there is a commitment to do that and I think that's important, because I think one of the crucial aspects to this piece of legislation is the question of how it's going to be paid for. I don't think there is anything in this that speaks to that, and we're going to have to hear about those plans because I do agree, as much as this chagrins me, with the member for Etobicoke West that this is a question of downloading. I think it is a question of downloading.

We have to hear from the municipalities all across this province as to how it's going to work, how much it's going to cost and how this government is going to have plans to pay for it, because it's going to be a significant cost, I think even more so in the context of the social contract, as it's been called, the NDP social contract, because that is going to involve significant cuts to municipalities, many of which have committed to no tax increases and then find themselves cut even further.

The difficulty of imposing this power and imposing these requirements, both in terms of the regulations and

this bill, is going to be a real problem for municipalities, and I think we're going to have to hear about how that's going to be done. I'd like to hear from the government as to how it proposes to do this.

1730

I think what we really need is consideration of a reasoned plan on this bill, and one of the issues that is not very well addressed, although I've heard the member for Essex-Kent talk about consultation with the private sector—I think that's a good thing and an important development, a development which is a long time coming. It's good to see it's happening, because I think the private sector has a very significant and important role to play in this.

First off, in that regard I would agree with my friend the member for Mississauga North when he commented the other day that one of the concerns is going to be related to the fact that this bill not impact on private waste management people in terms of how they conduct their business, and I think that clarification is going to be an important one.

Also, how the private sector is going to be involved in both the blue box program and waste reduction is going to be an important issue and one that should be addressed. I know that the member who was newly elected the same time I was, the member for Don Mills, made a lengthy speech on the issue of the costs related to this program, specifically the blue box program, and how there appear to be real problems in terms of funding. They're running out of their ability to fund, I believe, a third of the costs through the OMMRI, the Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc, and there was some \$4 million in blue box funding that they weren't able to do. I think we're going to have to hear about those in these committees and it's a concern that needs to be addressed more fully.

I will also talk, if I can, about the issue of user fees and I'm concerned that this could be a tax on the poor. In the by-election, when I was canvassing door to door in some of the Metro Toronto Housing facilities and Ontario Housing Corp facilities, I was asked by many people why there was no recycling program in those buildings. To be honest, I was surprised to find out that there were none.

Obviously, this is going to impose that recycling program, but I'd like to know, if I could, from the member for Essex-Kent and the government, how it's proposed that those housing corporations deal with the additional cost. Are they going to be asked to contribute, is the municipality going to assume it, and how is that assessment going to be done? I think it's quite clear in the social contract, which is the latest euphemism for, "You take less and we'll all be happy," that there is a cut coming to those authorities as well and to the people who live in them. I know there are proposed cuts in the Ministry of Community and Social Services, to the

people living in those buildings, that concern me greatly. The people are being asked to do with less and yet this bill provides a proposal to tax those people for the garbage they produce and I think, in those circumstances, that would be a significant and real problem, to create a tax on the poor. I want that issue addressed and discussed.

I think the member for Etobicoke West and many others in our party talked about the issue of tipping fees. There's no doubt the municipalities have less money to deal with this issue. Tipping fees have gone up, the revenue has gone down and of course much of that has to do with the recession plaguing this province. Whether and if we get out of it under the reign of this current government, I have grave and serious doubts. It might take the re-election of a Liberal government under the fine leadership of Lyn McLeod to do that, finally to give the new hope this province needs, and I think Lyn McLeod can give that hope.

The context for this bill, as well: I'm a bit concerned about its application in the Metropolitan Toronto area with the two-tier difficulty. As the member for Essex-Kent and the government know, it's proposing that a regional council, directly elected, can pass a bylaw and take over the collection of waste and other waste-related issues. I think there's a concern about that in Metropolitan Toronto. I think there's a lot of possibility for friction between the levels of government, and I think with respect to the kinds of issues in the waste management system that collection is an issue which can be more efficiently and effectively dealt with by the local municipality. I think there are issues that need to be addressed in that regard, and I think we have to be concerned that we don't create a problem where one doesn't exist.

In the context of the goal of the 3Rs, I think my friend the member for Brampton North mentioned quite appropriately the national packaging protocol, which was also picked up on by my friend the member for Brant-Haldimand, another newly elected Liberal. We're winning all these by-elections, Mr Speaker, and slowly chipping away at the majority, one by one. I hope we have a few more resignations and maybe we can get the election a little bit earlier.

Mr Bisson: Bye, bye. Nice seeing you.

Mr Hayes: It's already happening.

Mr Murphy: I appreciate the interventions. The one thing I'm also concerned about is the issue of targets. The question is how we're going to meet these targets in the time frames. I gather there's been a cutting back of these targets and that we're going to try and attempt to achieve the targets—I gather it's meeting, in 1992, the 1987 target, and by 2000 the 1987 target. We're moving that back and the concern is that there isn't enough money in the system to successfully achieve these targets.

If we're transferring more and more of the authority to municipalities, which cannot afford the programs and policies, then we're going to have a real problem. They're going to be put between a rock and a hard place with legislation that mandates that they do it, without the financial resources to do it, without the tax base to do it. They're going to be forced to increase taxes. To say that somehow downloading is not what this bill is about, well, that's entirely wrong.

It seems to me it's another transfer of the financial responsibility for achieving what is agreed to be a goal that we all think is worth achieving, but is transferring it to municipalities all across the province without a reasoned plan as to how they're going to deal with it.

I think with all due respect that it would have been better if we'd had some sense of that plan first. This is a government that's been rocketing back and forth from one position to another, to establishing an IWA, then getting rid of an IWA. There isn't much sense to it.

I think also of the blue box program, and I'm wondering in the context how the government proposes that municipalities are going to pay for this program, because it's not just a blue box program. You're not just putting blue boxes out there and collecting it. There are specialized trucks which are required. There are source separation facilities.

Then the question is, what are we going to do with what's sorted and what's collected? We're already collecting more than we can effectively use. We're not selling it in a way that's generating sufficient revenue to pay for what's being produced, and yet we're proposing to do more with it. If there is a sensible way to encourage and expand the use of the waste reduction facilities of the blue box program, it's to find an economic and efficient use of the end products of this program, and then we'll have created an incentive in the system for people to do it. We need that financial incentive.

I do not see in this, or in fact in anything, a very effective program for looking at those issues, and they need to be looked at. Again—and I want to come back to the private sector in this regard—I think we need to have more and better consultation with the private sector, because I do believe that environmental regulation can be part of an engine of economic growth. I do not believe in the tradeoff between environment and the economy. I think both of them can be pursued in the same context. But it has to be done in the context of a reasoned and sensible plan, of sitting back and saying, "How are we going to achieve this?"

1740

I think we have to look at the end products of recycling, of the blue box program, look at how we can use that efficiently, and then encourage the private sector to be involved, to be innovative. If we can do this, as a province, more effectively and more efficient-

ly, then we have a technology and a process that we can export to other provinces, to other countries.

I haven't heard of a plan to deal with that, and I'd like to hear from the member for Essex-Kent some of his concerns and the government's ideas in terms of dealing with that issue, because it seems to me that if we keep producing recycled material without any end for it, all we're doing is increasing the costs and having no way to regain the funds. They're going to be added to the property tax base and the income tax base and we're just going to end up with an economy—the only way we're going to end up reducing is to have a recession so bad that no one is creating any waste. That's just not what this party, certainly, is prepared to see happen in this province.

I think we have a proposal to bring this to public hearings, and I think that's an important thing to have happen, because there are other issues that we need to talk about in that context too.

I look at Bill 7 and the concerns that AMO has brought forward. They quite rightly are saying: "How are we going to deal with this at this time? The timing is bad. In the context, it's inappropriate." While they agree with the goal, it's just not the appropriate time. I think they need a bit longer to rethink this. I think maybe the public hearings will provide that opportunity. I hope they will, but if not, I think the government should be prepared to rethink this and come back with a reasoned plan.

Finally, I think we need to look at this bill and the regulations in the context of how it affects my riding. In St George-St David I go through the riding and I see lots of people participating in the blue box program, lots of people who want to participate, lots of people who have goodwill towards the improving of the environment by the 3Rs, by blue box and other programs. I think that's an important public participation that we need to take advantage of and encourage. All three parties in this Legislature need to encourage and move on that. I think, in part, some of the directions of this bill are appropriate in doing that. In general, I think providing some of that authority in municipalities is appropriate and some of what's in here is a helpful way to start doing that, subject to the concerns that I have expressed.

In the end, I think there are appropriate and helpful things in here, but there are issues that haven't been addressed adequately or appropriately and I would very much like to hear from the member for Essex-Kent and from the public during the public hearings on that. I would appreciate any comments from my colleagues.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Cochrane South.

Mr Bisson: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. One thing about being in this corner of the House: It's hard

to catch your eye at times.

I would just like to touch on two of the issues that were raised by the member opposite and see if we can dispel, I guess you can say, some of the myths that have been raised in regard to this bill. The first one is the whole question of downloading, and I think we need to be clear as members here on all sides of the House when we're talking about that.

The argument put forward by both opposition parties is that this particular bill is a downloading of costs on to the municipalities by us somehow cutting funding or something. I think we need to be clear about what this thing is. Bill 7 gives municipalities the ability to be able to manage their waste problems, but at the same time it gives them basically the authority to be able to turn around and to do such things as, for example, setting targets in terms of reduction of waste coming out of a particular plant or whatever.

Put it this way: At present, if a municipality were to say, "I'm telling you as an industrial user that you must do the following in order to be able to cut down on your overall waste," there would be a clear question about who has the authority to do that, and whether a municipality indeed has the authority under present legislation to do that.

What this particular bill does is give the municipality the ability, and clarity under the law, to be able to set those standards. This bill does exactly that: It gives authority.

On the downloading issue, I think we need to be careful, because this is a new program the municipalities are generally in favour of doing and putting in place. I guess the comparison can be made, for example, of when the Liberals were in power and there was a whole question of the court security issue. The Liberal government of the day said to municipalities, "You have to provide those services," much the same way as we're saying under this bill, "You have to provide those services." Was that downloading? No. It was a mandating of program and regulations. Every government deals with this. This is regular legislation that is around, and it's just the way that things are done.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? Seeing none, the honourable member for St George-St David has two minutes in response.

Mr Murphy: In response to the comments from the member for Cochrane South, it's quite clear that this is a downloading. There's no doubt about it. It is a program that is being introduced without any plan for how it's going to be paid for.

This government is saying to the municipalities, in both this act and the regulations: "Here's what you have to do. We're telling you to do this and we're not going to tell you how to pay for it, other than to go tax your municipalities or put a special user fee on occupants or

home owners." That's clearly downloading. You are transferring that responsibility to the municipality with no plan for its payment.

I have a great problem with that. Municipalities do, and I have a problem with that. And I have a problem with the tax on individuals. It's going to be a tax on the poor in my riding. People who can't afford it are going to be forced to pay some kind of fee to have the garbage picked up, and that's unacceptable.

There's no provision in here whatsoever of how municipalities are supposed to pay for this. I haven't heard any announcement from the government on how they're supposed to pay for it. I haven't heard this member's idea on how it's supposed to be paid for, and until we have that, we can't have a full and fulsome debate on this issue. I wait to hear the government's ideas about how it's going to be paid for.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I'm pleased to have an opportunity to join the debate on Bill 7, which looks like a fairly general piece of largely permissive legislation around a subject, I must say, that occupies an increasing amount of interest in my county, which is Renfrew.

I simply want to bring a local and regional perspective to this and say some things that might offend some people, including my friend St James Bradley, late of the Ministry of the Environment, because I can say that in my area, my county, Renfrew, a very large, probably the largest county in the province, some 36 municipalities, larger even than Glengarry, where we have several municipalities of fewer than 400 and 500 permanent residents, garbage and waste management is the issue of the moment.

I listened with interest to my friend the member for St George-St David talk about the concerns that he has about the impacts in downtown Toronto. I want to say that in terms of rural Ontario—and certainly I represent a very large slice of it in Renfrew county—

Hon Mr Pouliot: Sorry. Everything's relative. I was thinking of the north. Sorry, with respect, sir.

Mr Conway: There are days I really—

Hon Mr Pouliot: There are many more, on this side, of those days.

Mr Sutherland: He represents a larger constituency.

Mr Conway: Oh, listen. It's like the old British empire: A greater empire has never been than Manitouwadge. I understand that you represent an imperial constituency in the far northwest. I mean, I only represent 3,000 square miles of southeastern Ontario.

The point I want to make—

Hon Mr Pouliot: Well, make the point. What is it you want to say? You've got 10 minutes. Hurry up.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. The member for

Renfrew North has the floor. Other members will have opportunities to ask questions or comment when their turn comes.

1750

Hon Mr Pouliot: Ask him to focus. What is it he's talking about? Bill 7. Waste management. That's what we want to hear.

Mr Conway: The issue is garbage, and I won't point to exhibit A. But I just simply want to make the point that in Renfrew county there is a very real concern around this whole issue of waste management, the costs, the processes. I look at this bill and I see much in it that I can certainly support, and I'm sure my friend the former mayor of Manitouwadge could support it as well.

I happened on Saturday night to be with some of the people from the county-city waste management group and some other people who are very much involved in the provincial administration of certain of these policies. I left that meeting angry, depressed, and I'm going to share some of that anger and some of that frustration this afternoon; angry because we've spent a lot of time and we've made, I think, considerable progress in terms of changing attitudes. Younger people, people much younger than myself, have a very different notion of what's appropriate conduct in terms of packaging and throwing things out into "the dump." So volumes are being reduced through a variety of strategies that have been supported, I think, on all sides.

But I'll say this at first instance, that as a ratepayer in the city of Pembroke, as someone who owns a little bit of a rural property out in cottage country—

Hon Mr Pouliot: Do you want an easement?

Mr Conway: No, I don't need an easement, but what I would like to see is a better presentation to individual citizens by their municipal governments as to the actual cost, the per-household cost, of waste management. My impression is that in both my municipalities where I live, in the city of Pembroke and in the township of Brudenell and Lyndoch, where my seasonal residence can be found, the single most—

Mr Bisson: Seasonal residence?

Mr Conway: Cottage, I guess, is what we call it; chalet.

The fastest-growing part of the tax bill is the waste management account, and most of us have no idea. I listened to my friends Saturday night talk about the costs that they're experiencing, and I believe them. But the worry I have is that, as municipal or as provincial politicians, we're a long way from conveying that message to our citizenry. If you're on the Essex county council or if you belong to the Ministry of Environment or if you're a friend of Jim Bradley, you know only too well what the pressures and what the costs are, but the population at large has no idea.

One of the recommendations that I would make is

that there should be included in every municipal tax bill an estimate of the per capita cost on an annual basis of waste management. I think there should be a big fluorescent slip in my tax bill saying that in Brudenell township this year, of my \$1,000 worth of taxes—because the school tax is indicated, and when it goes up by five cents or \$5, as it does on occasion, or when the local levy goes up, people see it and they are often concerned about it.

But the fastest-rising cost in the whole package is waste management, and there's no broad understanding of that. Until we make people understand that these costs are rising exponentially, we're not going to be able to bring people to an understanding of some of the alternatives that I think the ministry—

Mr Bradley: You're making disparaging remarks about me.

Mr Conway: Well, Bradley is a very generous fellow. He's a friend of mine. But I think of some of the policies that he introduced and that I supported, and in my county they've been beneficial, if only to the consultants and to others. Now, I know my friend Bradley and his colleagues back then intended that this not be a cornucopia for the consultants and others.

Mr Sutherland: That's eco-terrorism.

Mr Conway: The member for Oxford points out that this is some kind of eco-terrorism. One of the criticisms I have about both the current process and the process of the previous administration is that there is the happy assumption that this is ultimately just a process issue; just pour enough money and allow enough time and you're going to—

Hon Mr Pouliot: You're such a fence-sitter. You've never made a decision in your life.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Give the member for Renfrew North the opportunity of participating.

Mr Conway: My point about the process and my point about the policy is that much of this is going to turn on political decisions, and they're not going to be easy and they're not going to be very popular.

Mr Bradley: And they won't be on Radio Noon.

Mr Conway: And they won't be on Radio Noon.

But we are deluding ourselves and we're spending a lot of time and money if we think this is all just about finding a process.

It's 14 years ago now, I guess, that Harry Parrott stood up after the first mess about siting a toxic waste site in the Cayuga area.

Hon Mr Pouliot: You are starting to blend.

Mr Conway: Just hear me out. There was a first decision made about putting that toxic waste dump down in the Grand River valley. We backed off the minute that the problems with that were identified.

What did we then do? We went out and we got Donald Chant, an eminent environmentalist, as eminent as they come, and gave him a crown corporation called the Ontario Waste Management Corp. All I know is that 13 years and \$125 million later we have one of the world's best processes, but what else have we?

I am not saying that there have not been benefits, but I look at my own county and I look at the debate, and where I think we have failed provincially—I will say it in our government and I think in this government—is not being clear enough and firm enough in telling people what the parameters are really going to be.

Mr Bradley: And the cost.

Mr Conway: And the cost as well. I cite the Ontario Waste Management Corp example carefully, because it was 10 or 12 years and I think, at last count, \$125 million. I bet you I am understating that. I will say this: We will never build anything at Smithville or Bismarck. It will not be built. Undoubtedly that will be a \$125-million exercise that'll have some very significant benefits. We won't do anything there, but we will have had a great debate.

I look at the current situation. We've got in the Pembroke area a waste management study that's going on. It's been going on for a number of years, it's taken a very considerable amount of time and energy and a lot of money, and I'm very hopeful that it's going to produce some finality. I know that when the final recommendations are made there is going to be a firestorm of protest around whatever is decided. There is no consultant and there is no process that is going to obviate that reality.

Mr White: Obviate that reality?

Mr Conway: Or lessen that reality.

Mr Stockwell: Don't worry; it was only Drummond.

Mr White: It is important to use the right language.

Mr Conway: No, no, my friend is right. We're not going to be able to—

Hon Mr Pouliot: We don't know that word, but we don't dare, but when we find out it doesn't even exist—

Mr Conway: You check it out, friend, and come back.

Mr Bradley: Stephen Lewis used to make up words, not Sean Conway.

Mr Conway: You check it out and come back and we'll talk about it. But my point is simply this: I don't think that politicians, whether they're municipal or provincial, should be deluded into thinking that at the end of the day you're going to not have to make some tough choices around relatively unattractive options. I think the environmentalists are good friends of mine; St Bradley is certainly one of them. But a lot of this debate over the years has been focused on highly desirable, very idealistic options. Those are not the ones I expect to be choosing from at the end of the day.

I just simply make the point that I look at my county and I look at what we've put our municipalities through, the hundreds of thousands of bucks, the millions of dollars, a lot of which expenditure was probably necessary, but we're getting to a point—

Mr Stockwell: You are going to need funding.

Mr Conway: Yes, I am just saying that my taxpayers in these rural municipalities are looking at this debate and they are seeing some very worrisome things.

One of the things that I think we've got to address for a lot of the rural counties is what kind of county reorganization is going to be required because of the costs of waste management. The costs for these small townships is enormous and they are clearly not going to be able to manage this cost on their own.

Mr Speaker, as I know you want me to adjourn the debate, let me conclude before I adjourn the debate this afternoon. I think we have to be honest with municipalities, particularly the small rural ones, in what we have for them and what our intentions are, because the costs in rural Renfrew are back-breaking and we know the mood of the taxpayer with respect to these kinds of additional burdens. I want to return to this when we pick up this debate next time. I'm happy to adjourn the debate this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker: When we next debate Bill 7, the honourable member for Renfrew North will have the opportunity of completing his time.

It now being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, May 11, at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1800.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

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Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Algoma	Wildman, Hon/L'hon Bud	ND	Minister of Environment and Energy, minister responsible for native affairs / ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A.	L	
Beaches-Woodbine	Lankin, Hon/L'hon Frances	ND	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Brampton North/-Nord	McClelland, Carman	L	
Brampton South/-Sud	Callahan, Robert V.	L	
Brant-Haldimand	Eddy, Ron	L	
Brantford	Ward, Hon/L'hon Brad	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Finance / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Finances
Bruce	Elston, Murray J.	L	
Burlington South/-Sud	Jackson, Cameron	PC	
Cambridge	Farnan, Mike	ND	
Carleton	Sterling, Norman W.	PC	
Carleton East/-Est	Morin, Gilles E.	L	Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président et Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Chatham-Kent	Hope, Randy R.	ND	
Cochrane North/-Nord	Wood, Len	ND	
Cochrane South/-Sud	Bisson, Gilles	ND	
Cornwall	Cleary, John C.	L	
Don Mills	Johnson, Dave	PC	
Dovercourt	Silipo, Hon/L'hon Tony	ND	Minister of Community and Social Services / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Downsview	Perruzza, Anthony	ND	
Dufferin-Peel	Tilson, David	PC	
Durham Centre/-Centre	White, Drummond	ND	
Durham East/-Est	Mills, Gord	ND	
Durham West/-Ouest	Wiseman, Jim	ND	
Durham-York	O'Connor, Larry	ND	
Eglinton	Poole, Dianne	L	
Elgin	North, Peter	ND	
Essex-Kent	Hayes, Pat	ND	
Essex South/-Sud	Mancini, Remo	L	
Etobicoke-Humber	Henderson, D. James	L	
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Grier, Hon/L'hon Ruth A.	ND	Minister of Health / ministre de la Santé
Etobicoke-Rexdale	Philip, Hon/L'hon Ed	ND	Minister of Municipal Affairs / ministre des Affaires municipales
Etobicoke West/-Ouest	Stockwell, Chris	PC	
Fort William	McLeod, Lyn	L	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
Fort York	Marchese, Rosario	ND	
Frontenac-Addington	Wilson, Hon/L'hon Fred	ND	Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille
Grey	Murdoch, Bill	PC	
Guelph	Fletcher, Derek	ND	
Halton Centre/-Centre	Sullivan, Barbara	L	
Halton North/-Nord	Duignan, Noel	ND	
Hamilton Centre/-Centre	Christopherson, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services / solliciteur général et ministre des Services correctionnels
Hamilton East/-Est	Mackenzie, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Hamilton Mountain	Charlton, Hon/L'hon Brian	ND	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, government House leader and minister responsible for the automobile insurance review / président du Conseil de gestion, leader parlementaire du gouvernement et délégué à l'Assurance-automobile
Hamilton West/-Ouest	Allen, Hon/L'hon Richard	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère du Développement économique et du Commerce
Hastings-Peterborough	Buchanan, Hon/L'hon Elmer	ND	Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Députée	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
High Park-Swansea	Ziemba, Hon/L'hon Elaine	ND	Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for human rights, disability issues, seniors' issues and race relations / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre déléguée aux Droits de la personne, aux Affaires des personnes handicapées, aux Affaires des personnes âgées et aux Relations interraciales
Huron	Klopp, Paul	ND	
Kenora	Miclash, Frank	L	
Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles	Wilson, Gary	ND	
Kitchener	Ferguson, Will	ND	
Kitchener-Wilmot	Cooper, Mike	ND	
Lake Nipigon/Lac-Nipigon	Pouliot, Hon/L'hon Gilles	ND	Minister of Transportation, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Transports, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Lambton	MacKinnon, Ellen	ND	
Lanark-Renfrew	Jordan, W. Leo	PC	
Lawrence	Cordiano, Joseph	L	
Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W.	PC	
Lincoln	Hansen, Ron	ND	
London Centre/-Centre	Boyd, Hon/L'hon Marion	ND	Attorney General, minister responsible for women's issues / procureure générale, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
London North/-Nord	Cunningham, Dianne	PC	
London South/-Sud	Winninger, David	ND	
Markham	Cousens, W. Donald	PC	
Middlesex	Mathysen, Irene	ND	
Mississauga East/-Est	Sola, John	L	
Mississauga North/-Nord	Offer, Steven	L	
Mississauga South/-Sud	Marland, Margaret	PC	
Mississauga West/-Ouest	Mahoney, Steven W.	L	
Muskoka-Georgian Bay	Waters, Daniel	ND	
Nepean	Daigeler, Hans	L	
Niagara Falls	Harrington, Margaret H.	ND	
Niagara South/-Sud	Coppen, Hon/L'hon Shirley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; chief government whip / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs ; whip en chef du gouvernement
Nickel Belt	Laughren, Hon/L'hon Floyd	ND	Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Nipissing	Harris, Michael	PC	
Norfolk	Jamison, Norm	ND	
Northumberland	Fawcett, Joan M.	L	
Oakville South/-Sud	Carr, Gary	PC	
Oakwood	Rizzo, Tony	ND	
Oriole	Caplan, Elinor	L	
Oshawa	Pikey, Hon/L'hon Allan	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Municipal Affairs / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Affaires municipales
Ottawa Centre/-Centre	Gigantes, Hon/L'hon Evelyn	ND	Minister of Housing / ministre du Logement
Ottawa East/-Est	Grandmaître, Bernard C.	L	
Ottawa-Rideau	O'Neill, Yvonne	L	
Ottawa South/-Sud	McGuinty, Dalton J.P.	L	
Ottawa West/-Ouest	Chiarelli, Robert	L	
Oxford	Sutherland, Kimble	ND	
Parkdale	Ruprecht, Tony	L	
Parry Sound	Eves, Ernie	PC	
Perth	Haslam, Hon/L'hon Karen	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Health / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Santé
Peterborough	Carter, Jenny	ND	
Port Arthur	Wark-Martyn, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Education and Training / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation
Prescott and Russell / Prescott et Russell	Poirier, Jean	L	
Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings/Prince Edward- Lennox-Hastings-Sud	Johnson, Paul R.	ND	
Quinte	O'Neil, Hugh P.	L	
Rainy River	Hampton, Hon/L'hon Howard	ND	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Renfrew North/-Nord	Conway, Sean G.	L	

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Députée	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Riverdale	Churley, Hon/L'hon Marilyn	ND	Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
S-D-G & East Grenville / S-D-G et Grenville-Est	Villeneuve, Noble	PC	
St Andrew-St Patrick	Akande, Zanana	ND	
St Catharines	Bradley, James J.	L	
St Catharines-Brock	Haeck, Christel	ND	
St George-St David	Murphy, Tim	L	
Sarnia	Huget, Bob	ND	
Sault Ste Marie / Sault-Sainte-Marie	Martin, Tony	ND	
Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry	L	
Scarborough Centre/-Centre	Owens, Stephen	ND	
Scarborough East/-Est	Frankford, Robert	ND	Speaker / Président
Scarborough-Ellesmere	Warner, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Scarborough North/-Nord	Curling, Alvin	L	Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation / ministre de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs
Scarborough West/-Ouest	Swarbrick, Hon/L'hon Anne	ND	
Simcoe Centre/-Centre	Wessenger, Paul	ND	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Simcoe East/-Est	McLean, Allan K.	PC	
Simcoe West/-Ouest	Wilson, Jim	PC	
Sudbury	Murdock, Sharon	ND	
Sudbury East/-Est	Martel, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	
Timiskaming	Ramsay, David	L	
Victoria-Haliburton	Drainville, Dennis	Ind	
Waterloo North/-Nord	Witmer, Elizabeth	PC	
Welland-Thorold	Kormos, Peter	ND	
Wellington	Arnott, Ted	PC	
Wentworth East/-Est	Morrow, Mark	ND	Minister of Education and Training, minister responsible for the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / ministre de l'Éducation et de la Formation, ministre responsable du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main- d'oeuvre
Wentworth North/-Nord	Abel, Donald	ND	
Willowdale	Harnick, Charles	PC	
Wilson Heights	Kwinter, Monte	L	
Windsor-Riverside	Cooke, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Windsor-Sandwich	Dadamo, George	ND	
Windsor-Walkerville	Lessard, Wayne	ND	
York Centre/-Centre	Sorbara, Gregory S.	L	
York East/-Est	Malkowski, Gary	ND	
York Mills	Turnbull, David	PC	
York North/-Nord	Beer, Charles	L	Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre, président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires gouvernementales
York South/-Sud	Rae, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	
Yorkview	Mammoliti, George		ND

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No. 17



Nº 17

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 11 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 11 mai 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

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Index inquiries

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Tuesday 11 May 1993

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I'd like to bring to the attention of the Legislature an incredible event that happened in my riding of Timiskaming, specifically in the town of New Liskeard, on Friday last.

The Treasurer, Floyd Laughren, was visiting our riding. It gave an opportunity for our constituents to really show their unhappiness and unease with the two massive decisions that the government made on April 23 in regard to my riding. One was the cancellation of the Ministry of Natural Resources relocation of jobs to the town of Haileybury, and the other was the closing of the New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology in New Liskeard.

We had 4,000 people turn out to greet the Treasurer. We had tractors and farm equipment lined up all the way from Earlton, 20 miles down Highway 11, to the town of New Liskeard. In the town, the Treasurer was greeted not only with the demonstration at the college, but also we had about 3,000 people in the town itself dressed in black, in mourning costume, if you will, mourning the loss of these jobs to our economy.

If anything, this government has pulled together the people of the Tri-town areas of Haileybury, Cobalt, Dymond township and New Liskeard. We are determined not to let these cuts affect our economy. We are going to fight these decisions. The government has a right, obviously, to take a look at the budget, and has a problem there; we don't feel it's the government's right to be able to make those decisions without consulting and working with the community.

I today would ask the government to work with our community. We think we can find cheaper ways to run that college, and we'd like to see some of the jobs come to Haileybury. Our economy needs it, and we're quite willing to work with this government to make this happen and build a better economy in the riding of Timiskaming.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): I rise today to congratulate a group of grade 7 students from the Cumber Valley Middle School. These students recently became national champions in mathematics.

The team of Roger Hong, Manfred Lau, Simon Law and Daniel Jacobs were first overall among 605 schools in the Canadian National Mathematics League competition.

In addition, Cumber Valley's grade 8 team of Vincent Yeung, Colin Huang, Savvas Panagiotakos,

Miriam Hamburg, Alex Blasko and Franklin Sham earned second in Ontario and sixth in Canada among 566 schools.

Individually in the contest, Vincent Yeung was fourth in the province of Ontario and 16th nationally, while Colin Huang was eighth in Ontario.

I would like to take this opportunity as the representative for the riding of Willowdale to congratulate the students and teachers of Cumber Valley Middle School for their outstanding performance at the competition.

The math skills that these students are learning will provide them with the opportunity to advance academically while allowing them to compete for the jobs of the future. The importance of mathematics cannot be underestimated in today's increasingly specialized and technical job market.

I'm proud to take this opportunity to congratulate the students of Cumber Valley Middle School for the excellence they demonstrated at the national mathematics championship and to say that in Willowdale our students can compete.

HIGHWAY ACCIDENT

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): Road collisions are the leading killer of young people aged 16 to 24 in Ontario. In 1991, more than 1,100 people died and 90,000 were injured in road collisions. Early Sunday morning, eight more young people were added to those figures in a fiery crash in Caledon just outside my riding of Halton North. Every car accident like this represents futures that have been stolen from our neighbours across this province, like the futures of the eight young people who died in that crash in Caledon.

We have to start recognizing that driving is a tremendously dangerous activity and that driving is not a right but is a privilege.

With this in mind, I hope that all members of the House will support the quick passage of the proposed graduated licensing system, which will help reduce the amount of serious and often fatal car accidents on our roads that take so much away from our province's wellbeing. This legislation will require new drivers to gradually earn driving privileges by successfully completing tests at the end of each of the first two years of driving.

In the first year that similar legislation was introduced in New Zealand, fatal collisions in that age group declined by 13% in the first year alone. That's 13% more young adults who can celebrate their futures and 13% less tragedies for our neighbours, and that's the kind of effect that's worth supporting.

I believe that with the graduated licensing system, we'll help to reduce such accidents like the one that

happened in Caledon last weekend.

SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): The Minister of Community and Social Services has today made an important announcement of government policy, but once again, he chose to make this announcement outside of the Legislature and just to the press.

I am, however, happy that the minister has decided to take the advice of countless families and care givers and our Liberal caucus and cancel at least part of the \$5-million cutback to sheltered workshops. The minister announced today that \$1.5 million will be saved.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate the many concerned people who have made effective interventions to my office and I'm sure to the minister's office on behalf of developmentally delayed individuals, whose lives are profoundly affected by government's unfulfilled promises and this government's lack of direction.

Today's announcement, as usual, leaves more questions than answers, but I ask the minister now to share with us his studies and evaluation of the supported employment programs announced in last year's budget and to be reinforced in this year's budget. I trust that the working group announced today will be given all necessary resources to, without undue delay, engage parents, consumers and local agencies and, as the minister challenges, determine a real meaning for non-vocational, community-based support alternatives.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): My statement concerns St Ann's Separate School in Penetanguishene, which is the only school in all of Simcoe county to be recognized as a green school under the federally sponsored Society, Environment and Energy Development Studies program.

I want to thank principal Tim O'Halloren and vice-principal Bob Doucette, who decided to have St Ann's participate in the SEEDS program.

SEEDS involves children from junior kindergarten to grade 8 completing projects and activities that either communicate about the environment or enhance it directly. After completing an overwhelming 100 projects, St Ann's was officially designated a green school, the first of its kind in Simcoe county, I might add.

It was both exciting and informative to watch as teachers and pupils participated in skits that promoted the greening of Ontario. They also designed a beautiful mural featuring Waldo the raccoon, which will be on display in the school for years to come.

I was impressed with the attitudes and achievements of both the teachers and pupils of St Ann's, who clearly recognize that there is an important role for each and every one of us to play in the protection and preservation of our environment. I was really pleased to be part of the SEEDS celebration on May 7, 1993, at St Ann's

Separate School in Penetanguishene which recognized the first green school in Simcoe county. It may be the first, but I expect it won't be the last. Congratulations.
1340

SANDBANKS PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): This year is the 100th anniversary of the provincial parks system in the province of Ontario, and I believe that every provincial park in the province—in fact it's true—is represented by at least one member of this Legislature.

When we think of provincial parks, we often think of that very famous provincial park in the province of Ontario, Algonquin Provincial Park. But I want to tell you about a provincial park in my riding. Indeed, in Prince Edward county there's a provincial park called the Sandbanks Provincial Park. I want to tell you, it's about 35 years old. It may be a new member to the provincial park system, but an outstanding park nevertheless. It represents two of the finest baymouth sand-dune bars in the province of Ontario, and indeed it is very close to where I grew up.

I want to say that it previously was called the Outlet Provincial Park and now it's called the Sandbanks Provincial Park, represented by the east lake sector and the west lake sector, and it provides some spectacular scenery. The west lake sector has sand-dunes that stand 30 to 40 metres tall and are very attractive to all those who come and see them. The east lake sector has one of the finest beaches in the province of Ontario, about a mile wide, and maybe not as deep this year because the water level in Lake Ontario is quite high, but certainly a safe place for children to play.

So I invite all the people in the province of Ontario: Come on down to Prince Edward county and visit Sandbanks Provincial Park.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): I want to draw the attention of this House to the serious job crisis facing our youth. The unemployment rate for 15- to 24-year-olds is 17% and in some regions reaches as high as 20%. Right now, more than 140,000 young people are out of work in this province. We can't afford to let these grim statistics and these difficult realities continue to go unchallenged.

The Premier's response to the crisis of youth unemployment has been totally inadequate. The \$1-billion Jobs Ontario Training program is not working effectively: 55,000 people have applied for the program and only some 7,500 have had success in getting jobs. That simply isn't good enough.

My leader and this caucus believe that government can and should intervene to help create jobs for youth, and that's why we have developed a plan that will assist young people in reaching their goals. The Liberal plan

would immediately help a total of 69,000 young people, 18,000 more than under current government programs, and many more over the longer term. The measures would cost \$183 million, paid for with funds from existing programs, not through tax increases.

The Liberal Jobs for Youth program builds on successful existing programs and introduces some new ideas, making it both workable and fiscally responsible. The proposals in our Jobs for Youth initiatives follow a commonsense and practical approach to addressing the urgent needs of young people who can't find work. I commend this program to you, Mr Speaker, and to the government.

NURSES WEEK

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I invite all members of the Legislature to join with me in recognizing Nurses Week, which runs from May 9 to 15 in Ontario. The theme for the week is appropriately titled Nurses: A Dynamic Force in Quality Care. Nurses Week provides all of us with the opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate the vast contributions made by nurses to Ontario's health care system.

Nurses are the largest group of professionals in our health care system. As front-line workers and gatekeepers to the system, they have played a critical role in helping to ease the transition to a restructured health care system. Through their professionalism, devotion and commitment, nurses have helped to soften the impact of the government's slash-and-burn health care agenda.

Nurses Week is an important instrument in helping to raise public awareness to the vital role played by nurses in support of our health care system. The cutbacks in our system, where 2,000 nurses have been laid off in the past year, have meant more work and more responsibilities for nurses.

Nurses continue to provide leadership in meeting new challenges and in continuously improving the quality of care they provide to the people of Ontario. The strength of our health care system is a function of Ontario having capable and talented nurses throughout the province.

Nurses are quite often the forgotten jewel in our health care system. I'd like to extend my appreciation to all nurses in Ontario, because without their tireless contribution, there would not be quality care in Ontario.

SPRUCE FALLS MILL

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): I'd like to provide the House with an update on the progress of the Spruce Falls mill in Kapuskasing. Most of us know that the mill, formerly owned by the Kimberly-Clark corporation and the New York Times, was acquired by its employees and area residents in partnership with Tembec in December 1991. Spruce Falls Inc produces quality newsprint and publishing paper grades for the

newspaper and commercial publishing industry.

The positive results of Spruce Falls Acquisition Corp in its first fiscal year of operation represent an extraordinary accomplishment. The company has generated modest earnings of \$6.6 million year-to-date during a period when newsprint transaction prices dropped to record lows and competitors incurred significant losses. These results are due in large part to the reorganization and streamlining of its operations, along with an enormous amount of support from the employees and area residents.

In order to meet the company objectives, a new thermomechanical pulp plant will begin production in July of this year. The new \$116-million state-of-the-art TMP plant will produce 500 metric tonnes per day of high-quality, high-yield pulp with 50% less wood fibre. It also replaces the existing rossing-debarking operation, a groundwood mill and a magnefite plant, which closed last week.

The closure, as part of the original business plan initiated by new owners in 1991, did not come as a surprise to them. In fact, they are already entering a phase of development which includes plans for a chip-stud mill to be fully constructed by early 1994, creating an estimated 75 jobs.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTION FINANCES

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I beg to inform the House that today I have tabled a supplement to the 16th report of the Commission on Election Finances containing recommendations concerning the indemnities and allowances of the members of the Legislative Assembly.

RESIGNATION

Mr John Sola (Mississauga East): Mr Speaker, I rise today on a point of personal privilege to offer my resignation to the leader of the official opposition and the leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario. It is my intention to continue to work for my constituents as an independent member.

I have been a member of this Legislature for five and a half years. During that time, I have endeavoured to represent the interests of my constituents to the utmost of my ability. I have always been an ardent defender of human rights for all peoples. I have spoken on many occasions condemning violations of human rights perpetrated against Lithuanians, Latvians, Chinese, Estonians, Romanians, Hungarians and numerous others.

As a Canadian of Croatian descent, I have been deeply affected by the destruction and unspeakable horrors that have been and are being inflicted upon the peoples of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and other areas of the former Yugoslavia. I have and I will continue to speak out against those atrocities, notwithstanding that my warnings have gone unheeded and my

efforts have been largely ridiculed. The defence of human rights should have no political or national boundaries, and it is our duty as members of the human race to speak out against abuses no matter where they occur.

On March 11, 1993, at a forum held at York University dealing with atrocities being committed against women in Bosnia, I strongly condemned the perpetrators of these atrocities as well as any individuals or groups supporting or condoning them.

It was never my intention to generalize or cast aspersions on any particular group. I would like to apologize to all Canadians, particularly Canadians of Serbian heritage, who respect human rights and who have been in any way offended by my remarks. As Canadians, we are of course constantly striving to ensure that our society is harmonious and that all feel equal and accepted. I have enjoyed these privileges as a Canadian over the last 41 years and will work to ensure that all Canadians are guaranteed equality and security for themselves and their children.

1350

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PRESS GALLERY

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Mr Speaker, perhaps I might rise on a point of order, although I see many of them are absent, to point out to you that elections in the press gallery were held today. I'm sure you would like to know, as all members would like to know, that Richard Brennan from the Windsor Star was elected president for the third consecutive year; Guy LePage, CKCO-TV in Kitchener, vice-president for electronic media; Emilia Casella, Hamilton Spectator, vice-president for print media; Betsy Powell, Canadian Press, secretary; Randy Rath, CHCH-TV in Hamilton, treasurer.

I'd point out, and I'm sure they would like this to happen to some of us and not others, that all received an acclamation. Congratulations to them from, I'm sure, everyone in this House.

The Speaker: The member will be surprised to learn that he does not have a point of order. However, it is a point of great interest to all of the members.

ORAL QUESTIONS

INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Mr Monte Kwinter (Wilson Heights): My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Minister, exactly one year ago today—well, it's actually a year ago tomorrow—to great fanfare, the former industry minister unveiled the government's industrial strategy. Included was a three-year, \$150-million sector partnership fund to help sectors compete internationally. When your government unveiled its expenditure control package last month, however, this fund was put on hold for this year and has now become spread over a five-year program.

So far the government has not spent any of the sectoral partnership money and will not spend any this year, yet—and I think you and I both agree—this is the very time when industry needs this money to help with its restructuring. A key part of the government's industrial program has been effectively disabled during this critical time when it is most needed.

Minister, you have announced the closing of all of our foreign trade offices. You've put on hold for this year the sector partnership fund to help sectors compete internationally. Could you tell us what use an industrial strategy is that has one of its key elements non-functioning?

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I think the member raises a good question, but it provides me with an opportunity to clarify some of the issues that he raised and to, I think, correct the record on a couple of points.

First of all, he is correct to say that the sector partnership fund will be spent over a five-year period instead of a three-year period. In fact, in our discussions with the players from various sectors and in the work plans that we've been developing with them, it has become clear to us, and also with their agreement and in many cases their insistence, that they recognize that this assistance will be better over the long term and that some of the work plans involve long-term development, and a five-year period is an appropriate period. So it does accomplish two things.

I will not deny to him that it does help us in a cash-flow situation, but the money will still be spent. As the budget and estimates come forward, you'll see that there is money earmarked for spending this year. The first of the sectoral plans came forward in the area of telecommunications. We are working with a number of other sectors. I'm in the process of taking those through approval right now for their initial work plans, and I will in the very near future be in a position to tell the member and others the details of those.

Mr Kwinter: My information is that in the telecommunications sector it's going ahead, but that it's going ahead with their money and not with any government money.

But let's take a look at another plank in the government's much-touted industrial strategy, and that is the one-stop investment centre which was to give potential investors access to all kinds of information about government programs and Ontario's business opportunities. The then industry minister promised to have this investment resource up and running by last fall. Now the ministry is promising to have these centres open some time next year. Much like the sectoral partnership fund, the one-stop investor shopping centre is stalled at the very time when new investors could be looking to Ontario for investment opportunities.

Why is it taking so long to set up the one-stop investor information service, or is the ministry so busy looking for places to cut spending that it never got around to even setting this service up?

Hon Ms Lankin: First of all, referring to the lead-in to the member's question with respect to the telecommunications strategy, I should point out to him that the technology networks funds that are being sponsored are government funds and that there is in fact a commitment of government dollars to that. As well, the process of developing that was supported through the government.

There is a council that's being established and there are government moneys that will support that. As well, part of the strategy is a commitment to government as a model user, which will involve investment in terms of our own capital dollars in equipment, software and processes within the government.

I understand the point he's making. I think he's wrong on some of the facts. We will be continuing to roll out information under the sector partnership fund. I think that it is something that will be moving on very shortly, and that he will be impressed with the results.

With respect to the Ontario investment, what was originally called a centre now is referred to as an Ontario investment service, and for a very good reason. We brought together a group of stakeholder advisers to work with us in terms of the development of this, as well as working with the investment subcommittee of the Premier's Council. In discussions with them, they had very clear input and advice into how these services could best be organized. They view it more as a service and what we can provide through services, as opposed to a bricks-and-mortar centre.

We've redesigned the program with the input of the private sector and the financial community. It's quite exciting. Again, we believe that with that advisory group that's put in place, we will have this operational within the next year. We are in the process right now of working with municipalities and others to bring together the databases and to release the request for proposal for the establishment of the systems that will provide the information to potential investors.

Mr Kwinter: Minister, it would have seemed to me that the way to have gone about it would have been to have designed the program before you announced it, not announce a program and then start designing it and then have to make the adjustments. What you have done is you've set up expectations you can't deliver. It really puts the whole program in a bad light.

This is a delicate time in Ontario's economic recovery. The indications are that the province could start growing again, but we still see job losses and companies leaving Ontario for more friendly climes in the United States. Last May's industrial strategy was supposed to

improve the environment for companies looking to expand and invest in Ontario.

So far nothing concrete has happened. Not one industry has tapped into the sectoral fund, a program which the government has now decided not to fund for this year, and the one-stop investment information service will be more than 18 months behind schedule when it is finally up and running. The government's industrial strategy has turned out to be nothing more than words on paper, with no concrete action to help companies and improve the investment climate in Ontario.

Does the failure to set up these two key elements of an industrial strategy mean that the government has jettisoned the goals of business and totally turned its back on them, solely for the reason of dealing with the deficit?

Hon Ms Lankin: I have to come back and both correct the member and ask that he listen to the answers and incorporate them in his next questions. Quite frankly, his question shows a lack of understanding of the industrial policy and the sectoral partnership and where we're headed.

There never, ever was any commitment for individual firm-specific assistance under the sectoral partnership fund. In fact, the whole premise of the sectoral partnership fund is to move away from firm-specific assistance and to look at how we work within a sector to develop pre-competitive cooperative actions around R&D and around a number of other sorts of things.

The progress we've made there in a very difficult area, of bringing together firms with labour in a sector that does not have a history of being cooperative, that does not have a history of working together, to try and identify what the state of the sector is and what areas could be addressed in a cooperative way that could bring up the competitive advantage of that sector, that could lead them to being export-ready and internationally ready, that process has been very successful. Again, I tell the member to wait just a few days and he will get the information on that.

Just a last comment: With respect to the investment services program, I can tell you that it is not a program that has fallen into any kind of disrepute. The private sector working with us is very supportive of the concept and there is a lot of energy and excitement in it. I would invite the member to speak directly to the people who've been involved in helping us design it.

1400

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): My question would ideally have been to the Premier, but I gather he's—

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): He's on a talk show.

Mr Phillips: He's on a talk show, as someone said. In the absence of that, I'll direct my question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. It has to do with the management of the expenditure control plan. I think the minister will understand that municipalities in the province have truly been thrown into turmoil; "chaos" may be too strong a word, but certainly turmoil.

It was five months ago, Minister, that the government announced specifically to the municipalities the money that they would have to manage their affairs in 1993. They've been working, I think it's fair to say, very hard to bring their budgets in, in many cases, with no tax increases. In many cases, they have done an extremely good job. Yet here we are, and these municipalities, Minister, as you know, are more than a third of the way through the year; their budgets are set. In many cases, their tax rolls have gone out, and they find that they see a 10% reduction in the promised transfer payments from the province.

My question to you is this: What happened between the time you made the announcement, which was only five months ago, and now that would lead you to say to those partners that they will be getting 10% less from the province, and do you agree that you have indeed thrown them into turmoil?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): I don't agree that we've thrown them into turmoil. I recognize that some municipalities have concerns about this. I met in Hawkesbury last week with the smaller municipalities. I also met with the northern municipalities the week before. I think that one of the things that is fairly clear to them when you talk to them on an individual basis, one by one, is that they recognize that there's a major problem that we all have to share a responsibility for and share in the solution to.

In fact, Joe Mavrinac, the president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, has pointed out, and I think it's correct, that it's important that the government not make across-the-board reductions, that there are differences in municipalities. We've given the assurance that we will be releasing, hopefully this week, the figures as to exactly how each municipality will be affected by the unconditional grants.

Mr Phillips: The municipalities, everybody in the province knows you've got a problem. That's no secret to anyone. It is how you manage the problem that's at issue here. It was just five months ago that you gave a solemn undertaking: Here would be your transfer payments. They know the problem. They're trying to deal with the problem.

Minister, knowing that you are now going to reduce the transfer payments by 10%, and when the social contract negotiations are complete I gather that it is your intention to take another \$285 million from municipalities, representing, I gather, a pullback, a drawback on their transfer payments in the range of

40%—as I say, they understand the problem. In fact, they have been spending the last four months wrestling with the problem, Minister; nothing new to them. My question to you is this: Do you share the mayors' concerns about this midyear reduction in their transfer payments, and will you undertake to set the meeting up between the Premier and the mayors this week, before the final decisions are made on the budget, so that there can be some consideration of their concerns as the budget is finalized?

Hon Mr Philip: The honourable member is not correct in most of what he said. In fact, the \$285 million is not coming directly out of them. The successful outcome of the social contract negotiation means that all the impacts of that process should be fiscally neutral. He understands that.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Oh, give me a break.

Hon Mr Philip: The member for York West keeps interjecting and trying to talk over our voices. As usual, he doesn't make any sense. He didn't make any sense as the municipal councillor.

Interjection: Etobicoke West.

Hon Mr Philip: Etobicoke West, I should say. The fact is, and I will try to answer the member because I think he asked a good question and has provided me with an opportunity to answer, that any reductions in the provincial transfers through the social contract should be offset by similar reductions in the municipal compensation costs. So in fact, that \$285 million, assuming that the social contract talks are successful, and we understand that they are progressing well at the moment, will in fact be fiscally neutral.

Mr Phillips: Frankly, I do understand the numbers and I understand the problem the municipalities are facing. I will say to you, you've put them into a very tough spot. There's none of them that would disagree with the need for restraint; I'll say that again. But here they are, they are four months, almost five months into the year, they have spent that money; it's gone. Now they've got eight months left in which to find that money that you are taking away from them. So they understand the problem far better, I think, than you do, Minister.

The Premier has said on several occasions that you are going to build into the budget—it's a fait accompli, I gather—a \$2.4-billion expenditure reduction program and the \$2 billion from the social contract. That's a fait accompli.

My question to you is this. The mayors want to meet before the budget in order to have some influence on that final decision. They believe they face a significant crisis. I think they should have an opportunity to persuade you one way or the other on that. Will you firstly guarantee that that meeting with the Premier will

be arranged before the budget is announced, and will you undertake to let the House know and to let the mayors know what you are prepared to look at in terms of helping them work their way through a very tough situation as they try to deal with restraint midway through their fiscal year?

Hon Mr Philip: The municipalities are part of the social contract. They're at the table, they are presenting their ideas, they are part of the process. Unlike other governments across this country that have simply slashed, we are actually consulting with the various stakeholders. The municipalities are there at the table. They have every opportunity to present their views, and indeed if they wish to meet with the Premier, then I'm sure that the Premier would consider that, as would Michael Decter. They are meeting with various people and obtaining input from various people. But the municipalities are at that table; they're part of the process, so I don't know what the honourable member is saying, that somehow they're not being consulted. They're right there, part of the consultation process.

TAXATION

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): We're one week before a budget. We have no Treasurer here. We are in the middle of social contract talks. We have no Premier. We have no Deputy Premier.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): To whom is your question addressed?

Mr Harris: I would ask then for your permission and unanimous consent of the House, since the Premier is in Windsor on open line right now on the Wayne McLean show, and I have talked—my office—with Wayne McLean and he is agreeable, if we could phone the Premier on the Wayne McLean show, place our question to the Premier so that all of Ontario—

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat. The honourable leader of the third party may have missed the admonition to this House just a few days ago about the use of electronic equipment in the chamber, notwithstanding his request to speak directly with the Premier. The rules, however, permit the member to address a question to any minister who is present in the chamber.

Mr Harris: I wonder, could I have unanimous consent to talk directly to the Premier on the Wayne McLean show and place my question that way?

The Speaker: I'm sorry, no. No, I won't allow the question to be placed, because we do not permit the use of cell phones in the chamber. But the member is invited to place a question to one of the ministers who are present.

Mr Harris: I'm sorry they won't give me unanimous consent. It would have been good for the show. It would have been good for the people of Ontario too, Wayne, and I apologize that we cannot talk to the Premier directly.

I then will place my question to the deputy Deputy Premier for the day, as we were told, the deputy Deputy Premier for the day; so that's whom my question is to.

Yesterday the public sector unions said they would return to the bargaining table. The reason is because they were encouraged by a letter from the Premier. The Premier said in that letter, Madam Deputy Deputy Leader for the Day: "In this spirit, I welcome your proposals. Your proposals on taxes and revenue have been referred to the Minister of Finance for consideration in his budget preparation."

Minister, the unions have called for a wealth tax. Given the Premier's letter, it would appear that in fact a wealth tax may well be the price of your social contract discussions. I would ask if you would confirm for me today, Madam Minister, as the Finance minister said on March 6, that there will be no wealth tax in the upcoming budget.

1410

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): Questions of this sort have been asked many times in the Legislature. The Premier and the Minister of Finance, on all occasions, have indicated that taxes will not form part of the negotiations at the social contract table. That remains the case and that in fact is the direct response from the Premier, both at the meeting that he held with the unions and the social contract coalition and in the letter directly.

Ideas for taxation from all sectors of society have been welcomed by the Minister of Finance. I know that I have met with numerous groups and have passed on their comments to the Minister of Finance. He's met directly with a large number of groups and has considered proposals from the business community, from boards of trade, from unions, from others.

There is nothing out of line with what has been suggested. Those proposals have gone forward to the Minister of Finance—the actual nature of taxes and the specific taxes the leader knows well that I will not comment on in question period here—and will form part of the Minister of Finance's report to the Legislature when he presents his budget next week.

Mr Harris: By way of supplementary to the minister, this is a minister who should be responsible and should be promoting and encouraging the upsizing of the private sector, particularly at a time when others are proposing the downsizing of the public sector.

The private sector has told you very clearly—those who still have a nickel left—that that is the money that, if it invests it in Ontario, will create the jobs we need in Ontario. You, as minister responsible for the private sector, for economic development, should be fighting tooth and nail to make sure that no more of those dollars are taken away from the job creators.

I would ask you, Madam Minister, to confirm this:

The Treasurer said there will be no wealth tax in the upcoming budget. I would ask if you agree with Michael Harcourt, who said there'll be no wealth taxes in British Columbia. "We want that money to stay in British Columbia to create jobs in British Columbia." I want to know if the minister agrees with that. If you do, will you assure us that you will fight tooth and nail to make sure that there is no new wealth tax in the upcoming budget?

Hon Ms Lankin: I want to draw the member's, I guess, attention back to the original reason why we've embarked upon this balanced approach to the setting of the budget this time. We've said clearly that we believe, in order to have a climate for economic investment, in order to bring about the possibilities of economic growth, in order to be prepared to build on the beginning of the return and the recovery, that we need to do something about the government's fiscal situation and that the budget needs to deal with bringing the deficit under control. We've said we wanted to approach that in a way that allowed us the latitude to maintain investment in our infrastructure and in critical programs to support growth in the economy and a climate for economic investment.

With respect to the package that we have been developing for the budget, we've looked very clearly at a balanced approach which tries to have a fair contribution from all Ontarians. That includes looking at expenditure reductions. It includes the social contract negotiations and it includes taxation.

I've met with a number of groups that have raised their concerns around any kind of taxation. Those views I have reflected to the Treasurer. The actual composition of any tax decisions will be made by the Treasurer—

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Lankin: —and set out in the budget, Mr Speaker. I will not today in the Legislature answer direct questions on that.

Mr Harris: By way of final supplementary to the minister: Your own committee—what did we call it? The Fair Tax Commission? Right. It studied wealth taxes and indicated potential negative economic impacts, such as reduced investment in Ontario, discouragement for private savings, the possibility that people might simply move themselves or their money to other provinces to avoid the taxes.

I would ask the minister if she agrees with that assessment, if she agrees with Michael Harcourt. Does she have some study in her ministry that suggests that wealth taxes will somehow encourage investment in Ontario, contrary to all the laws of economics and of taxation policies? If she does, will she table that? If not, will she confirm for us today—and you would understand the concern, Minister, because the unions said,

"We're not coming to the table unless you look at our tax proposals," and the Premier wrote them a letter back: "Thank you. We like your tax proposals. I'm giving them to the Treasurer."

So there is great fear and great concern out there. I would ask you again, Madam Minister, can you assure us that in your desperation to appease the unions, there will not be new wealth taxes in the upcoming budget?

Hon Ms Lankin: The member opposite continues to ask a question that he knows well I will not answer at this point in time. The Treasurer, the Minister of Finance, will be coming forward with a budget next week. He will get his answer about specific tax moves at that point in time, when that comes forward.

I want to clarify one point on the record, which is to ensure that the people listening know what the Premier actually said in his response to the unions. He said, "Your proposals on taxes and revenue have been referred to the Minister of Finance for consideration in his budget preparation"—what has been done to all other proposals: they've all been referred to the Minister of Finance.

The government shares your determination to make the tax system more equitable, and the work of the Fair Tax Commission will be helpful in that regard. May I say to the member that he must also look not just at the impact of taxation—and any tax moves we make, and there will be some, we hope will be a very fair and equitable package—but also at what the impact would be of not taking action: an increased deficit with the resultant increase in public debt interest, much of which would be paid to offshore capital markets, and what that would do to our economy in terms of taking money out of the Ontario economy. We have a balanced approach and we think it's the right one.

LABOUR RELATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): In the absence of the Premier and in the absence of the Deputy Premier, who I'm told is in his office just across the street—he doesn't want to come and represent the Premier while the Premier is in Windsor—I will address my second question to the deputy Deputy Premier for the day.

The Premier has been very clear that he needs \$2 billion from the payroll of the public sector. Never mind the tax part of the agenda, never mind the cutbacks in spending, he's been very clear that there will be \$2 billion less in total payroll costs in the public sector this year over last year. He said that figure is not negotiable, that's what it's going to be: not negotiable.

However, as we saw in their proposal last Friday, the unions seem to be talking about everything else under the sun except actual payroll cuts. They've said: "You can cut here. You can cut there. Hike taxes. Do this. Do that."

We were led to believe that this process was different from any other—and quite frankly, I supported it on that basis—that you're going to cut \$2 billion in payroll costs, but that instead of doing it unilaterally, just 5% across the board or imposing it, you would invite the unions to discuss how the 5% could be cut.

Can you tell me this, Madam Minister: As far as you're concerned, is it still your intention to live up to the ironclad commitment that the \$2 billion is not negotiable and, if so, can you explain to me why, while the unions are present, not one word of the negotiations has been about how to cut back their wages?

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): I would suggest to the member that this is a very different process and that if he supported it for that reason, he will support the fact that what's different about is that we said we would go to the table and listen to what people had to say. He seems to suggest that we should have a unilateral approach, even though we're doing it differently and not really having a unilateral approach.

I would point out to the leader of the third party that within the government's proposals to the social contract table, we very clearly talked about things like the tripartite task force that would have terms of reference that would look at a review of measures to improve effectiveness, efficiency, equality and affordability of the public sector service delivery in Ontario; a review of procurement; contracting of activities; a review of senior management numbers and compensation; de-layering.

Some of the proposals that the unions have placed on the table are very similar to that. So we indicated by our own proposals that there were a range of things that we would be willing to look at within the \$2-billion number that had been set.

In direct response to the member's question around the \$2 billion, the Minister of Finance has been very clear, and the government is very clear, that this will form part of our approach on the three-legged stool, as the Minister of Finance has referred to it.

Mr Harris: Minister, when you asked the unions for a proposal on how to cut \$2 billion from their payroll, they sent back suggestions on how to further cut the private sector. They sent back suggestions on, "Here's some taxes you can increase." They said if you'd had whistle-blowing legislation, they could find, I don't know, another billion dollars or two. They had lots of ideas for you, but none on how they would cut one cent from the total wage package they have.

1420

Minister, during your government's first two years in power, inflation increased a total of 6%, yet, for example, OPSEU's overall wage bill for the same two years increased 19.5%. So, Madam Minister, even if the

public sector employees take an overall 5% cut in the third year, they will still be far better off during your term in office, where payroll costs have gone up have gone up far in excess of the rate of inflation for that same three-year period; far better off, I think you would agree with me, than the private sector, which, according to your Premier, is in the middle of the toughest recession it's been in since, I don't know, the Boer War, to hear him talk some days.

Madam Minister, given that what you've called for is a 5% cut to bring them down to a level well in excess of the rate of inflation during your three-year term, can you explain to me why it is that the union leaders don't even want to have one word of discussion on how to achieve that? Instead, all they want to do is talk about tax hikes: "Somebody else cut back, not us." Can you explain that?

Hon Ms Lankin: I would think that the leader of the third party should direct that question to the parties whose thinking he wants to know on that and not to me, as a minister of the crown. I can tell him what our thinking is. We've put forward a proposal; we've asked people to engage in discussions about our ideas and their ideas. Our proposal was much broader than just compensation, although that certainly formed part of it. We talked about openness and accountability, restructuring work, reskilling workers, partnership for Ontario capital investments, reform of the framework for collective bargaining.

In their response, they talk about reform of collective bargaining, they talk about workplace democracy, accountability. There's a lot in common between the two proposals, and the Premier, in his letter to the public sector coalition, I think has indicated that there is value in starting the discussions in earnest, and if we can start with where we agree, perhaps that will start moving us down the road to deal with some of the more difficult issues: those where we don't yet agree.

Mr Harris: By way of final supplementary to the deputy Deputy Premier for the day and also to the minister who I believe was responsible for negotiating that first contract that went up some 15% or so, yesterday the Finance minister said, "We will insist upon achieving \$2 billion at the social contract table." The Premier has said that part is non-negotiable. We know there are other discussions; we know there are taxes now on the table and everything, that they weren't going to be. But they've been very clear, the Premier and the Deputy Premier, about saying there will be \$2 billion in cuts in the total payroll cost to bring the public sector to still some 5% or 6% ahead of inflation over the time of your government: not bad, when you look at the private sector.

I would ask you this, Minister: Are you, as the deputy Deputy Premier for the day, prepared, on behalf of all the companies out there, all the workers who are

looking for jobs, to insist that this \$2 billion in savings will come out of these social contract talks, and if not, are you prepared to legislate it?

Hon Ms Lankin: Again, the leader of the third party has asked this question on a number of occasions, and the answer he gets from me, whether I am in this position for the day or whether I'm here for longer if the Treasurer and the Premier aren't here, will be the same as he's heard from the Treasurer and the Premier. We don't go to the table putting a gun to people's heads. We have committed ourselves to the \$2 billion. That will be reflected in the budget and ministries' estimates. There are a number of ways to achieve that, and the member knows well that one way might be to simply reduce further the transfer payments to reflect that amount.

I want to touch on one point that the member has raised in his last two supplementary questions, because I would hope that he would find this helpful. We wouldn't want to inadvertently mislead the viewing public. That is with respect to this issue of the 15% increase in the civil service, and how even with 5%, they're still doing well. It gives the impression of individual civil servants having an increase of that amount, and he compares it to the private sector, which rates actually talk about individual wage increases.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Lankin: Yes, I will. That amount he refers to includes increases in programs where new staff have been hired.

The Speaker: Would the minister please conclude her response?

Hon Ms Lankin: It is not an annual wage increase. It is very, very unfortunate that he continues to use that number in a way that could inadvertently mislead the public.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): In the absence of the Premier, to whom I wanted to direct this question, I guess I'll direct it to the Chair of Management Board.

At a time in the province of Ontario when developmentally delayed children are being denied the kind of assistance they require at home because of budget cuts, at a time in our province when people are having to line up on stretchers in the hallways of hospitals until there are beds available to them, and at a time in our province when senior citizens are being forced to dip into their meagre savings to be able to pay for drugs that are, in some cases, prolonging and saving their lives, could the minister tell us what possible justification he could present to this House for the millions upon millions of dollars that his government is squandering on self-serving political advertising?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): On the matters the member refers to in his preamble that dealt with, I think, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, I'll ensure that my colleagues take note of your comments and perhaps deal directly with you at some point.

In terms of the specific question that ended off that lengthy preamble, the advertising which this government does is no different from the advertising done by any other government in this country or, for that matter, in many others. The vast majority of that advertising is to make the people of this province aware of government programs, changes in government programs like the rent review legislation in this province, so that they in fact have appropriate access to the things that government provides and delivers to them.

Mr Bradley: The government of Ontario has squandered about \$1.5 million on advertising for Jobs Ontario instead of putting those additional funds into jobs themselves. Your government has spent \$1.7 million on blatantly political advertising over the issue of rent control that any objective observer would see as simply self-promoting for the government. You're spending money on posters and new advertising for the support and custody office at a time when the support and custody office itself needs the necessary staff to carry out its roles and responsibility.

So I ask the minister, in light of the squandering of this money in these very difficult restraint-filled economic times, would you now abandon this self-serving, politically generated advertising and return that money to needed services for people in this province?

Hon Mr Charlton: I've never, I don't think in my entire life, heard such a ridiculous set of conclusions out of a number of findings that the member has made.

Last fall, I can recall being in this House when members across the way were raising questions about the Jobs Ontario Training fund and the fact that at that time there were only a few hundred people who had been placed in employment as a result of that program. We have now started to promote the program and to date we have created over 23,000 new job positions in this province and put in jobs, aside from interview processes, some 10,000 people who are now actively working as a result of that program.

That advertising program that the member across the way refers to is helping the people of this province move into employment, off of unemployment rolls, off of welfare in this province, and providing a significant boost to the economic recovery.

LEGAL SERVICES

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): My question is to the Attorney General. Attorney General, I understand you've been meeting with various interest groups and advocating the imposition of provincial sales tax on

legal services. Is that correct?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I have certainly discussed with a number of concerned groups the proposals that have come forward from a number of different quarters around the imposition of provincial sales tax. As the member is well aware, the Treasurer is the person who is responsible for tax decisions, and one of the issues that I certainly have taken up in pre-budget consultation has been some of the suggestions that have come forward from various parts of the community around that, as I believe have come up around other professional fees as a means of revenue-raising.

1430

Mr Harnick: Attorney General, if the Treasurer imposes the provincial sales tax on legal services, what will be the effect on people's access to justice?

Hon Mrs Boyd: It would certainly be my concern, as I think it would be the member's, that particularly those people who are beyond the level where they could be protected by the legal aid plan and yet who have not got a great deal of income themselves might be unduly affected by that. That, of course, would have to be one of the considerations taken into effect by the Treasurer.

I know that the Canadian Bar Association and the law society have both made representation to the Treasurer, urging him not to impose a sales tax, and if one were imposed, to dedicate some of the funds to improving access to legal services if that should happen.

As I say, this is a decision that is up to the Treasurer. It would certainly be my job to advocate that if he were to make this decision, we as a government would have to take some very serious action to ensure that access was not affected.

HYDRO RATES

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): My question is to the Minister of Housing. Minister of Housing, you must be doing a great job of communication and marketing out there, because let me tell you, within a week, over half the residents of the Clearview cooperative housing in my riding have been sending me a number of letters.

This housing project was built in 1986 and provided affordable housing to the residents of the city of Chatham. At the time of the construction, electrical heat was installed because it was most economical. However, since that time, the cost has risen. As we've seen what the Liberals did with Ontario Hydro, it just escalated and took off, to the point where the residents of Clearview are paying double, even triple, the heating bills of people in homes heated by natural gas. Sometimes these bills are as high as \$500 for the December and January months.

My question to the minister is, with the social housing energy retrofit program being extended to these constituents; will they be able to get relief for the astro-

nomical hydro cost that is facing them?

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): The government has been very concerned about what high heating bills in particular are doing to households that are living in social housing. While it was cheaper to construct with electrical baseboard heating, it certainly has not proven cheaper to operate with electrical baseboard heating.

That was the reason why in 1991, first of all, we decided that non-profits would not be built with electrical heating except if there were no other fuel available, and second, to begin the social housing energy retrofit program, which also seeks to try and improve the effectiveness of water use. What we did last year was allocate \$9 million to this program. It converted over 12,000 homes and it employed about 250 people, so it's a program that's well worthwhile.

Mr Hope: By supplementary, I would ask the minister when she expects the announcements to come. Also, you know that you've received a number of these petitions, which are indicated by all the people who are there, talking about \$429 a month in hydro costs. Will you give deep consideration to these residents in Clearview and the working people of my riding and the city of Chatham?

Hon Ms Gigantes: We will be allocating, I'm pleased to say, \$19 million to SHERP this year, and the letters for the preliminary approvals on those allocations will be going out over the next week or so, so groups like the Clearview group which have made application should have a preliminary indication by just a few days from now, and then once they submit the details of their applications following on that initial approval, we should be expecting to be able to work with them, providing funding by midsummer.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Minister of Labour.

Minister, I've asked you questions recently in this House about workers' compensation, and as you know, the unfunded liability at the board is topping some \$11 billion, growing by \$100 million each and every month. Despite all the problems that occur, they're going ahead building this new 30-storey office edifice. I don't know if they're going to call it Mackenzie Place or Simcoe Place, something like that, something in your honour, and they're building that in downtown Toronto at incredible cost.

Also, to the minister, I understand in July 1992 there was a report of the Chairman's Task Force on Service Delivery and Vocational Rehabilitation and then in November of 1992 a response from the chairman of the WCB, in spite of all of these problems, called an action plan, wherein the chairman set up 47 internal committees to study all of the problems that have been—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Forty-seven?

Mr Mahoney: Forty-seven internal committees to study the problems.

I understand, rumour has it—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): And your question?

Mr Mahoney: —Mr Minister, that you have set up another committee and that the purpose of that committee is to look into the feasibility of a royal commission to study all of the problems and the reports set out in all of the committees looking at all of the problems at workers' compensation. You wasted \$3 million with John Sewell's commission.

The Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Mr Mahoney: You've set up a royal commission on education. Who knows what that's going to cost?

Is it true, Minister, that you're setting up a royal commission to study all the problems that we already know about at workers' compensation?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): The committees the member talks about are internal committees at the board itself, of its employees who are trying to come to grips with some of the problems we've had. I might say that the initial steps have been exceedingly successful, and they are the front-line workers who have to deal with the problems we're raising about the board at all times.

Mr Mahoney: I didn't hear an answer to the question. Let me try again. Minister, I asked you if you would ask, not instruct, as you misinterpreted my question, the Provincial Auditor if he would launch an investigation into the dealings that took place between WCB, between its investment fund, between Cadillac Fairview Corp and the Toronto-Dominion Bank to put up that edifice down at Simcoe and Front streets. I asked you to ask the Provincial Auditor to look into the misdealings that I've reported to you in this House. You refused to take action on that.

Instead, what you're doing is you're hiding behind committees. I mean, this is unbelievable, an \$11-billion deficit. Never mind your government's problems, we have a government agency that's \$11 billion in the ditch, growing by \$100 million each and every month, and what is your solution? Set up 47 internal committees. Do you know that there's even a recommendation—

The Speaker: Does the member have a supplementary?

Mr Mahoney: —in this report that recommends that the board approve the appointment of the chairman and the vice-chairman of the WCB instead of bringing it to cabinet, and they adopted that. They're stripping cabinet of the power—

The Speaker: Would the member please place a supplementary.

Mr Mahoney: —to deal with the WCB.

My question, by supplementary, Mr Speaker: Rumour has it, sir, that, as a result of all of these reports, as a result of the 47 internal committees, as a result of your latest task force, you are going to be recommending at the next cabinet meeting the establishment of another—

The Speaker: Would the member please place a question.

Mr Mahoney: —royal commission. You're a government of inaction, a government of royal commissions.

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat. If the minister detected a question—

Mr Mahoney: I didn't see you on your feet for the deputy deputy.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Mackenzie: I don't think any authority has been stripped from the government at this point in time, and I can tell the honourable member that we're always looking at ways to improve the service at the Workers' Compensation Board.

1440

HOUSING CONDITIONS

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): My question is to the Minister of Housing. The tenants at 1002 Lawrence Avenue East in North York have been subjected to deplorable conditions in their accommodation. They have been intimidated by hired thugs; they have had falling glass; the heat has been turned off in that building periodically and the elevators periodically do not work. What are you doing about this, Minister?

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): The problems that have existed at that apartment building certainly have been a matter of concern at the Ministry of Housing. Members of my own staff and members of the ministry staff have been working with tenants to try and help them use existing legislation, in particular the Rent Control Act, to improve conditions there. I could give the member a more up-to-date briefing once I have checked back with the ministry and find out the current state of affairs at that apartment.

Mr Turnbull: Minister, that isn't good enough. People from your ministry met with the tenants' group in January. The intimidation has continued; you have done nothing. To suggest that you're having further meetings and you're going to brief me is not sufficient. These people are enjoying terrible living conditions. That has taken since January. I'm asking you, what are you going to do for the tenants now?

Hon Ms Gigantes: The Rent Control Act of Ontario provides full redress for tenants. It provides that they shall not be harassed. It provides that where mainten-

ance is not adequate they can apply for a rent reduction. It provides that where there is a property order, the apartment owner cannot ask for an increase, even a guideline increase.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Rent reduction? They need heat.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Not right now. They need air-conditioning.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Ms Gigantes: Our task is to make sure that people in that building are getting the assistance they need to use the legislation, which, for the first time, provides them with those protections. I can assure the member that I will check and find out where matters are with regard to this particular property and make sure that the—

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): We are so dismayed. The dismay over here has reached a level of no return.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I'm in shock.

The Speaker: Will the member for Yorkview please come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I ask the member for Yorkview to come to order.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Madam Minister, I recently visited the Willis Training Centre, which is an enormous complex currently housing over 300 horses which are being trained to participate in the horse racing industry. I met with the local farmers and entrepreneurs within the industry, so they could discuss what they perceive to be negative impacts on people affiliated within the horse racing industry, and I believe that they do have some legitimate concerns.

Madam Minister, are you aware of these concerns, and if so, how are they being addressed?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): Yes, I'm aware of the concerns as expressed by the member. The province is committed to working with the Ontario horse racing industry to maintain its viability. I would say, with the exception of the city of Windsor and the law enforcement community, that no other interest group has been consulted so extensively as the horse racing industry when it comes to casino gaming.

It's quite true that horse racing is under tremendous competition throughout North America for the consumer's entertainment dollar, and through government programs like the tax-sharing arrangement, the province pledges to continue to assist the horse racing industry in meeting this competition.

Mr Abel: Thank you, Madam Minister. I'm sure those involved in the industry will be happy to hear that.

Since this is such an important industry and involves so many people, does your ministry plan to have ongoing discussions with those most affected?

Hon Ms Churley: Yes, I certainly do pledge to continue our consultations and discussions with the horse racing industry. A point that I'd like to make here is that when we release the request for proposals for the casino in Windsor, a component of that RFP in fact asks that the winning proposal would pledge to work extensively with the horse racing community and be sensitive to the Ontario horse racing industry.

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): I have a question as well for the minister of casinos, the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. I might add parenthetically that maybe you should get your act together with the horse racing industry, because I defy you to go head to head with it on the comments and the response you just had.

ELEVATOR SAFETY

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): Minister, you're responsible for elevators in this province and the safety of them. You spend \$4.5 million a year. There are 35,000 elevators in the province of Ontario. Last November the Provincial Auditor said that you're spending \$4.5 million and you're doing an inadequate job. In fact, there are as many as 10,000 elevating devices that are probably or possibly unsafe in this province.

That was six months ago. You apparently haven't done anything in the intervening six months. In fact, right in this building and in the building across the street, the Whitney Block, there are licences that have expired. What have you been doing for six months, Minister?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): The elevating devices branch—and I've said this in the House before when this question has been raised—has been recruiting an additional, I believe, nine inspector trainees. I said in the House before that some of them will be starting by June, so it's not as though we have been inactive. We have been busy and working with the Ministry of Labour in training new inspectors.

Mr McClelland: Minister, I think it's indicative of a general malaise and incompetence that runs throughout the whole government, and your ministry is no exception.

As of 11 o'clock this morning, licences in the west bank elevators in this building had expired, licences in the east bank had expired, licences in the Whitney Block elevators had expired. The licence in one of the central elevators, which you possibly use, you possibly

ride as you take the people of the province of Ontario for a ride on almost a daily basis now, expired in April 1991. You're only two years out of sync here. This is your responsibility.

What does that say about what else is happening in your ministry right across the board? Are you on top of it? Do you know what's going on or not? Where have you been? What are you doing?

Hon Ms Churley: I know that my new critic from the Liberal Party secretly knows that I'm doing a good job over here and that I'm on top of the issues.

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): We do too.

Hon Ms Churley: And Ed does too.

Hon Mr Philip: The Speaker thinks you're doing a good job.

Hon Ms Churley: And so does the Speaker. Good. We know that there have been too few inspectors and we have had some trouble in recruiting a number of inspectors, for a variety of reasons which I'm sure you won't let me go into here, but there will be very soon some new inspectors coming on stream.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

Mr Dave Johnson (Don Mills): My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

The assessment base in Metropolitan Toronto was put in place in 1953 using 1940 information. Today in Metropolitan Toronto there are about 40,000 homes under appeal because the system is out of date, and most people concede that it is very unfair. In frustration, Scarborough has appealed the assessment of 1,000 homes in the city of Toronto; and Toronto, in retaliation, has appealed the assessment of some 5,600 homes in Scarborough.

What action can we expect from this government to deal with this mess? What action can we expect from this government to assist thousands of innocent people who are caught in the middle of this battle?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): I met with Chairman Tonks and Councillor Cavalier on March 22 to discuss market value assessment. We've had ongoing dialogue about it. It's my hope that Metro will be able to address some of the issue which my predecessor and I have raised with him, issues concerning the reassessment plan. There are staff at Metro who are looking into those issues and they'll be getting back to me.

1450

But let me say that I'm concerned, as is he, and indeed I'm meeting with the mayor of Scarborough this afternoon and I have met recently with the mayor of Toronto. I'm concerned about the actions that are being taken by both Scarborough and the city of Toronto in appealing the assessments in each other's jurisdiction. I

don't think that that is terribly helpful and I don't think that that kind of thing between the two cities really is very constructive and will lead to a solution to the problem.

Mr Dave Johnson: Mr Minister, I'm glad to hear that there is concern. However, there are about 6,000 people who are caught in the middle of this mess. Indeed, in the city of Scarborough, for example, there are about 30,000 appeals. Some of these will be resolved fairly quickly, but thousands of them will go to the Assessment Review Board and that will require many additional courts at a very high cost to the taxpayers of this province to resolve these problems.

I guess my question to you is, what plans have you got in place, again, to deal with this, given that people are going to have this hanging over their heads for many, many months, well into next year, and how much cost will the taxpayers of this province be required to foot because we haven't had action to deal with this problem?

Hon Mr Philip: Certainly, the massive task of handling the more than 165,000 appeals against property taxes in Scarborough is already under way. We understand that they are being dealt with. There is the particular decision which we're still waiting for concerning Mr Marum's appeals, and that will be decided with due process.

But what I have informed the member of is that there is a process under way to deal with the very issue of the taxation and of the concerns that have been brought to us and brought to my predecessor, Mr Cooke, about such things as not having people across the province pay excessively for transportation and for hydro as a result of the particular proposal that was brought forward, not destroying the film industry in Metro Toronto, which would likely have happened—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Philip: —if that proposal had gone forward and not putting small business in Toronto out of business. Those concerns are being dealt with by the group at Metro and they will report back to me.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have a petition that was forwarded to me by Mr Carey Webb from Trenton, Ontario, and it's signed by many of the residents in the Quinte area. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers;

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I have affixed my signature to this petition.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): This petition is to the Parliament of Ontario.

"I, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To implement without delay the new open municipal government law and new conflict of interest law."

It's signed by Henry Freitag.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I have another one. It says:

"To the Parliament of Ontario:

"I, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To revise the Planning Act (and any other act) in such a manner that such conduct as shown above and experienced in the town of Penetanguishene never, ever can take place again in Ontario."

That one's signed by Henry Freitag.

BUILDING CODE

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): And the other one:

"To the Parliament of Ontario:

"I, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To revise the Building Code Act (and any other act) in such a manner that the fees charged must be reasonable and must only cover the cost for the services provided by the licence; also that the service must be performed in a frugal and most efficient manner.

"(Signed) Henry Freitag."

TAX REVENUES

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): The final one:

"To the Parliament of Ontario:

"I, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To pass a law prohibiting the use of tax money by provincial government, municipal government and organizations under the jurisdiction of the provincial government for meetings, conventions, gatherings and caucus meetings in other than public buildings;

"To pass a law prohibiting the use of tax money to

wine and dine officials of the government and their friends; the new law to set a limit of money and a limit when a lunch or food or other expenses can be charged. This law must also include municipalities."

That's signed by Henry Freitag, and I have endorsed those four petitions.

DRIVERS' LICENCES

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition here.

"To the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1990 the Ontario Ministry of Transportation demonstrated its good intentions by proposing a system of graduated licensing that would require newly licensed drivers to adhere to certain conditions and restrictions which would be removed as the driver gains driving experience; and

"Whereas statistics show that new drivers of any age are five times more likely to be involved in road accidents due to lack of experience, death and injury from traffic-related accidents continues to be the biggest risk facing Canadians between the ages of 16 and 24, and research strongly suggests a graduated licensing program would result in a decrease in traffic accidents, reduced injuries, save lives and make our roads safer,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate action to revise the law, specifically the Highway Traffic Act, to include a graduated licensing program for novice drivers.

"As concerned parents and citizens of Ontario, we believe that it is now time to take action to protect our young and novice drivers and, in effect, our very future."

I have signed this petition.

GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition from a number of people concerned about casino gambling. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally portrayed itself as having a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has expressed a historical concern for the poor in society who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gamb-

ling casinos despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves in this new and questionable initiative."

I am pleased to sign this, as I agree with the contents of this particular petition.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for Simcoe West.

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): Thank you, Mr Speaker; you're doing a good job. I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has had a historic concern for the poor in society who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I've affixed my name to this petition.

1500

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted with the citizens of Ontario regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally vulnerable and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government must immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I affix my signature to this petition.

Ms Zanana L. Akande (St Andrew-St Patrick): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of a neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling;

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

There are 83 signatures here, and I affix mine to it.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government of Ontario intends to reduce funding to the provincial psychiatric hospitals by \$45 million;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We do not want funding to be reduced in the Ontario mental health care system. We want programs in the community that truly serve the psychiatrically ill and provide the opportunity for hospitalization if needed."

There are over 70 signatures on this petition, and I've also signed the petition.

GAMBLING

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has had a historical concern for the poor in society"—or thought they had—"who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos, despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly, along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

This is signed by many signatures from the riding of Durham East, I believe, and I too attach my signature to it.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I have a petition to this House:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in

higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

That's signed by 90 people in my area.

DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): "To the Legislative Assembly:

"We, the undersigned, being residents of the Tri-town area in the district of Timiskaming, petition Premier Rae and the provincial government to reconsider their decision to cancel the MNR relocation to the town of Haileybury. We request that the following be considered:

"1. That the relocation program was initiated as an effort to minimize the impact to the district of the closure of the Sherman and Adams mines;

"2. That the 36 MNR positions have already been filled and families relocated and employees are working out of rented facilities in the town of Haileybury; and

"3. That Timiskaming is less able to recover or stabilize from the loss of the number of jobs lost in the past five years than areas more diversified."

This has been signed by 672 residents, and I affix my signature to this also.

GAMBLING

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): This is a new one.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has a historical concern for the poor in society, who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling;" and

Whereas the New Democratic Party is probably the most hypocritical party that's been elected in the last number of years; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the construction of legalized gambling casinos, despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition. It's signed by 11 people. It comes from the St David's United Church congregation in the fine city of Woodstock and it is similar to other petitions. These people are opposing casinos and after several "whereases" they ask:

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

1510

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS RELATIVES AUX MUNICIPALITÉS

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for second reading of Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management / Loi modifiant certaines lois relatives aux municipalités en ce qui concerne la gestion des déchets.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The member for Renfrew North was the last speaker, but he is not in the chamber, so I will recognize the honourable member for Markham.

[Applause]

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I haven't heard such applause since the last time.

Bill 7: The government, under the ministership of Mr Philip, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, has brought in a bill affecting waste management for the province of Ontario. I'd like to make a number of points on this bill, some positive and some negative. Certainly the bill has to do with the whole need to recycle in this province, and on that part of it I want to be very supportive of the leadership the government has given in this area. But I would also like to comment on a number of questions and problems I have with regard to the bill, some of the inconsistencies that exist within it as it pertains to Bill 143, which was passed last year, and some of the questions that concern the cost of implementing the bill. These questions have not been addressed by the government and certainly need to be.

Many people, when we in the Legislature are dealing with bills and new legislation, say, "All you ever do is criticize," and this adversarial form of government we're under, this parliamentary system, does require that kind of honest criticism that goes on with government initiatives. But one of the things our party has consistently done, when and if the government comes forward with initiatives that are supportable, that are worthwhile, that are financially affordable, is to have the courage of its convictions and share in that kind of decision-making.

Sometimes it's very painful, because there are times when the government has to make decisions that are not easy. When this government has come forward with a number of initiatives with regard to cutting back costs, we have been supportive of those initiatives. When this government came forward with its social contract discussions trying to find a way of cutting back on the costs of the payroll of some 900,000 public servants in Ontario, in spite of the hardship that this is going to bring to many of the people in the public service, our party has supported that.

But you will certainly hear from the leader of our party, the member for Nipissing, Mr Harris, and all the members of our caucus should this government decide to bring in more taxes. That is something we see as a very serious negative impact to the economy and to what Ontario is all about. I can guarantee you, on those issues we have a conscionable difference with, we will do everything we can to prevent the government from taking that dangerous course.

Dealing with the issue of recycling, I don't think there's any doubt that we as a party, having started the whole blue box program in the province of Ontario under the then Minister of the Environment, Andy Brandt, some years ago, started a process in which municipalities began to take a very serious effort in separating their garbage, finding those things that could be recycled and doing something with it. It's spread now to the point that we have some 90% of the population, in one way or the other, participating in recycling programs.

My community, the community of Markham, has been recognized as one of the leaders in the province of Ontario for its own initiatives in promoting recycling.

[Applause]

Mr Cousens: That's good. It's not often that Markham gets applause. Today, we'll take it again. I will take it, because indeed Markham has always taken a sense of pride in trying to be a leader when it comes to these areas of recycling and the initiatives that go into the 3Rs. In fact, if you go back some period of time and look at the people in our community, long before it became fashionable we had our own depots established in Thornhill and Unionville where the community could come and bring recyclables, and the

community volunteered time and energy.

I remember Mrs Audrey Pickard in Thornhill was one of the leading lights at that time, and Jeanette Annbinder, who now heads the town of Markham's initiatives for recycling, helped start the whole activity in Unionville.

It was a community activity. We did it because we wanted to, we did it because we believed in it, and when the government sanctioned it with its blue box program and it began to expand, our community committed itself wholeheartedly to it.

A community that takes these initiatives is doing something not only for itself but for the future generations. To that extent, it's good to see so many taking part in the blue box, participating in the compost programs. These are all ways in which the community as a whole is making a strong statement of support to the government's plan to, number one, reduce the amount of garbage by 25% at the end of 1992—and I think we can all participate in celebrating that victory at the end of last year—and then to aim for an even more difficult challenge that by the year 2000 we will have reduced the 1987 levels of garbage by 50%. That is going to be a tougher challenge to reach; nonetheless, the people in the province of Ontario have the kind of energy and commitment to work towards that.

So all of these things begin to build a story of success, that here is a province that at least is trying and is trying for the right reasons. I don't think that any of us can ever let up on those initiatives because we've only just begun to scratch the surface. Certainly, in our province, in our country, the world looks to us for leadership in so many ways, and I think we're going to have to continue to show other countries that we really mean business. Maybe that becomes some of the questions that we have out of our trade arrangements with other jurisdictions, that if they don't have an environmental agenda that somehow matches us, we're going to look at their way of doing business so that we won't be trading partners unless they too are participating in it.

Dealing with hazardous waste maybe is one of the areas where this province has gone astray. The Ontario Waste Management Corp continues to look for a site. They're getting down to the last stages of finding that site in Lincoln, yet no one has stepped in to see whether or not we still need the kind of facility that the government has spent millions of dollars trying to identify. In the meantime, the people of the province of Ontario, those businesses that are generating certain kinds of hazardous waste, have found other ways of disposing of it, so there may not be the same necessity for it.

Notwithstanding that, on the initiative of this bill coming forward to say, "We want to do something about waste management," the intention is honourable, that if we're going to do something about the recycling

initiatives in the province, we are moving in the right direction.

That really is where I start to differ with the presentations that have been given by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and this government. Intentions are honourable and good, the fact that we are moving in the direction towards major reductions in the amount of garbage that we have, major reductions in the amount of waste we generate, a way of reducing the amount of landfill that is required. If we as a province are able to act in a very intelligent and deliberate way to bring these numbers down, we will have done something that we all believe in.

But how do you do it? How much is it going to cost? How are we going to proceed to the next stage? That's really where we begin to have problems with Bill 7 and the plans that this government has put forward. When you look back to the blue box program, one of the reasons it was such a success was that it wasn't solely a government-sponsored program. It was a program in which you had Ontario Multi-Material Recycling Inc involved in developing a joint program.

Some 200 employers, businesses in the province of Ontario, with heavy support from the bottling industry and those businesses that felt they were contributing to the problem, wanted to contribute to the solution, so they brought their money to the table and they, with the support of the government of the day, began to develop the whole blue box program.

When you start seeing a program jointly funded by industry and government, then you start having cooperation and a spirit towards the solution that has everybody saying: "It can work. We'll make it work." In the early days of the blue box program, they couldn't always deal with those items that were put in the blue box, but now we're getting to the point where it's generally believed that the paper, the bottles, the plastics and the other substances are being recycled. That is certainly the direction we want to move in.

Now as we look at this, we're saying with Bill 7, "Who's going to pay for this?" Historically, we've had a relationship with industry that participated in the costs. Now we're coming forward with legislation that is brought down by the government that makes me ask, "Who is going to pay for this?"

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Who?

Mr Cousens: Well, I haven't seen the answer in the legislation.

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): There's only one taxpayer, Don.

Mr Cousens: There is only one taxpayer. My honourable good friend the Minister of Transportation is absolutely correct: There's only one taxpayer, who ends up paying the taxes at the municipal, the regional, the provincial and the federal levels, and that same

person is just running out of money to pay all the taxes that are coming out.

So if we're bringing forward another bill that has cost implications, we should analyse and assess those implications before we speedily pass the bill, because you can't just take the ideology and the intent, separate that off and say that because the whole purpose of recycling is in itself worthwhile, we don't need to look at the cost side of the equation. You have to take both and consider them and say, "Having decided that we're going to move towards a very difficult goal by the year 2000, to reduce the amount of garbage by 50%, how are we going to afford to do that?"

1520

Mr Stockwell: Change the rules.

Mr Cousens: We can change the rules, we can change the legislation, and as that legislation gets changed, so too do the ground rules. Those ground rules mean that municipalities, which are going to be forced to participate in the whole 3R program in a way they've never before been forced, will now have costs associated with these programs that they may not be able to afford. It goes into the cost equation again, because when the program was originally introduced with the blue box program, the cost equation had private industry, OMMRI, with the Ontario government, helping the municipalities cover the cost, and then there would be a recovery of some of the costs through the recycling efforts themselves.

But the fact now will stand that within a few years from now, this government may well remove the subsidies that underpin and underwrite the whole blue box program. Should those subsidies be removed, and I think it's safe to assume that those subsidies were intended to get the program started and that the money will not be forthcoming from the province on an ongoing basis, the municipalities will then have to pay the total cost of the blue box program and the recycling efforts of those municipalities.

The municipalities, as we look to the future, are not going to have the resources that can afford some of these initiatives. I think we owe it to those municipalities when in fact, at the present time, we're forcing upon municipalities far more costs that they have to save in order to run those municipalities, far more costs that are being taken away from the province in order for them to continue to survive.

We cannot continue this one-way street where the province continues to push down to the municipalities more and more costs, because at that point this one taxpayer we're talking about has to pay more of a local tax, and that tax, as it continues to increase, becomes an impossible burden for those people who have to pay those taxes in the municipalities, because taxes at the local level this year have been kept, pretty well across the province, on a whole basis where they were not

increased.

But that is not the case for the last several years where the province balanced its budget a few years ago based on the backs of the local taxpayers, where they ended up having to pay so much more. We now, through this bill, are going to pass down to the local municipalities more of that cost. That concerns me. We want to proceed with a recycling initiative, but we've got to be mighty careful of what we're passing on to the local ratepayers.

I know there is about to be a tax revolt. You're seeing signs of it in Scarborough, and the honourable member for Don Mills referred to it in a question earlier today on just the whole problem of that municipality in trying to face up and deal with the cost of doing business. I don't think there is a municipality today that isn't having screams and an outcry from those people, who as ratepayers are saying, "Hey, you've got to stop it." It's not just a matter of keeping your taxes at par; you've got to start reducing the local level of taxes. These communities will not begin to be able to address cutbacks in the cost of doing business if we at the Ontario level of the Legislature are going to be forcing upon them new obligations that cost money. So what we have to do is to find ways of working this through.

I ask the question, has the minister, has the government spent some time looking at all the costs of all the programs they're funnelling down to the local level? I don't think they have. I don't think they've taken the time to really listen and grapple with the hardship that municipalities are dealing with today, and the hardship of the taxpayer. When we're dealing with this bill, we have to begin to look at that.

The costs that will go into implementing this bill are far greater than you would see just by reading the fine print, because if you're going to have recycling facilities, one of the things you will have is material recovering facilities being brought in, at least two of them for Metropolitan Toronto. To build the first level of recovery station costs in the order of \$23 million to \$25 million, and then what you need to do is to feed that with the materials in order to get the things out of it, but there's a capital cost to it.

Then when you move to a second level that's going to take even more garbage in order to recycle and deal with it, that costs \$30 million to \$40 million to build. Where is the money going to come from to build those facilities? Is it going to come out of the tipping fees? That's going to come out of the local taxpayers. Are there going to be grants from the province to help it? Not likely. Not with the kind of financial hardship the province is facing now. There can't be a continuing sending of money to the municipalities to pay for this bill. There won't be the continuing downloading of funding to pay for it. The province doesn't have the money.

We're living so far beyond our means even now that we haven't begun to face up to the crisis that Ontario is in. When the Treasurer comes out with his number of a \$17-billion proposed deficit for Ontario, people say: "Well, I guess we're used to it. We had \$10 billion or \$12 billion last year." The accumulated deficit: \$10 billion or \$12 billion, and another \$17 billion.

There is no doubt that the people of Ontario cannot continue to live beyond their means. We have to find ways of cutting back expectations, cutting back what we really have to do. It may mean that we have to phase in some of these new ideas and new expectations and hopes, because we're not going to be able to do it within the short time frame that this government is imposing upon the municipalities.

I'm going to a meeting of York region council on Thursday afternoon and I have no doubt the kind of message that's going to be shared at that time, the genuine concern they have on how they're going to deal with the financial crunch they're in. Here in this year alone, they've completed their budget, the budget process is over, they've established the tax rate, and now with the expenditure cutbacks and the social contract that the government has, they're going to have to face up to how they are going to deal with the financial changes taking place in the province of Ontario.

What that's going to mean is not just close to a \$200-million withdrawal of unconditional funds; it's probably going to mean closer to \$500 million of money that will not flow through to the municipalities this year. There isn't any recognition of how the municipalities are going to deal with this.

It's a crisis of great proportions, and the crisis is not going away. What is happening is that with this kind of bill, we are adding to the crisis, because what we're going to try to do is to get our fiscal house in order, provincially and municipally and at every level. Yet when we come along and ficklely pass further legislation that is going to cost the local taxpayers, we have to think twice about it. What we may have to do is say, "This is worthwhile legislation and the expectations are honourable, but we can't afford to do it right now."

That's what we do in our own homes when we put off purchasing a capital acquisition of some kind. We say: "Look, we don't have the money now. We don't want to build up more debt. We are going to hold off on this expenditure until next year or the year after that." So you take the car to maintenance and you have new tires put on it and you keep it going a little longer.

If it means that we have to extend the goals and expectations for the province and for every one of us a little further into the future, then as long as we know why we're doing it, as long as we still continue to believe in the dream, then we can do it and we will make more sense to the people who are out there.

It's one thing to hold up this tremendous example where Ontario is now the leading environmental recycler in the world, and we're bankrupt. Somehow or other, you have to work out the two together. All I'm asking is that the government hold back on some of its thinking so that we don't necessarily add to the burden that is already just overcoming and overwhelming the people who are out there.

The inconsistencies that go on in the Ontario Legislature are another concern that I have, and it's not without a little bit of trepidation that I talk about it, but it ties into Bill 7. When this government brought in Bill 143 back in October, just two years ago—Bill 143 is the law that makes it necessary for Metro and York and Durham and Peel to come up with three landfill sites that will be selected in each of those regions, one for each of the regions. The selection process would be under the Interim Waste Authority, the IWA.

What would happen then is that Metro's garbage would come to York region, so York would then be the host site for some 40 million tonnes of garbage from Metropolitan Toronto and York over a 20-year period, and there would similarly be a large landfill site selected for Durham and for Peel. That process is continuing and we're now down to the short-list stage where there is a small number of sites, three of them in York region, three or so in Durham and another three in Peel, and by the end of August the government will have come up with its preferred site for landfill.

The kind of thing that you begin to ask is, now that we're coming out with this recycling bill, Bill 7, and we're dealing with Bill 143, what powers will exist within a municipality under the Municipal Act to deal more fully with all the problems of garbage? What's happened is that the government has tied the hands of municipalities under a previous bill, Bill 143, because the government said in Bill 143 that there can be no rail haul. This government will not consider the possibility of hauling garbage out of the Metropolitan Toronto area to a possible host site that would receive that garbage.

1530

Kirkland Lake has been identified as a possible place where there could be a rail haul operation that would take the garbage from Metro and York to a remote site. We visited the site, the Adams mine site near Kirkland Lake, and it is a site that would appear to have many advantages. The municipality voted 69% in favour of having an environmental assessment of that possibility, and yet the government has said, "No, we will not consider rail haul as a viable option." They've said that the only way in which Metro, York, Durham and Peel can deal with this garbage is within their own boundaries. That being the case, now that we're coming through with another bill, Bill 7, it's going to limit the options of municipalities if in fact the government is restrictive in the first place as to what they can do.

The government has also said that there will be no consideration of incineration. That's interesting, because a number of years ago there used to be 4Rs—the first 3Rs plus recover—and during the time of Mr Bradley, the Liberal Minister of the Environment, he removed the fourth R and we just quietly heard of reduce, reuse, recycle. The fact of the matter is, just recently—the other day—the leader of the Liberal Party announced at a gathering on the front steps of the Legislature that she's now in favour of incineration. We've been a little bit more careful in saying we're in favour of incineration, but we've at least said, "Let's look at incineration as a possibility and let it be seen as an alternative, but subject it to a full environmental assessment before you draw that conclusion. If the environmental assessment would allow incineration to be given further consideration, then the government could consider that as one of the ways of having energy from waste, possibly." None the less, Bill 143 ties the hands of municipalities and other jurisdictions in the province of Ontario from looking at either rail haul or incineration.

Here is a government that took away the rights of municipalities to look after their own garbage and imposed a set of rules through Bill 143. When they brought in Bill 143, they brought in the Interim Waste Authority and said, "Here, Metro, even although you're in the final stages of working out your own problem with waste, we now, the province of Ontario"—the Honourable Ruth Grier, then Minister of the Environment, came in with her bill, Bill 143, that took away the rights of Metropolitan Toronto and of the other jurisdictions who—

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Under standing orders, I believe the debate should be restricted to Bill 7, and the member is not debating Bill 7.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Thank you. As far as the Chair is concerned, the honourable member's on topic.

Mr Cousens: I want to stay with it, because when you have the government on the one hand taking away the rights of municipalities, as it did with Bill 143, and then coming along with Bill 7 saying, "Well, we're going to start giving you more rights," I have to say that it does tie in together. Everything is linked, and the honourable member for Durham West has a tremendous failure to see the big picture on anything. It's part of the myopic view the socialists and communists of the province of Ontario have where they're not able to get the broad, big picture. They're able only to see things in a narrow, focused way. They can't balance things out and say, "Well, what's it going to cost to do this?" They come along and their only way of looking at it is their way, and they're not able to do it in such a way that brings in private enterprise and the municipalities and the whole of the province.

What you have in Ontario right now is a one-party government that has another two years to serve and all we have to do is somehow survive till 1995. Notwithstanding that, everything integrates. You can't come along and say, "Bill 7 stands on its own merit as a bill to reduce the amount of waste in the province of Ontario," without looking at the way in which the province has taken away the rights of municipalities to do other things. They've taken away their rights under Bill 143 to incinerate. They've taken away their rights to rail haul. They've come along and said, "We are going to run the process for Metro, York, Durham and Peel's waste management systems through the imposition of Bill 143. Then they come along with this bill and say, "Here; under Bill 7, we're setting up another set of rules."

I just have to come back to the whole concept of the bill. The concept is valid. We have to continue to do everything we can to reduce the amount of waste we've got. But also, we have to look at the way it fits in with everything else that's on the public agenda. The public agenda is now at the point where the people of Ontario are saying: "Stop spending our money. Don't continue to bring forward legislation in the Ontario Legislature that is going to cost us more and more in our local tax dollars." We can come along with this bill and then walk away from it and say, "There, it's not our problem; it's the problem of the municipalities."

They can't afford it. What I'm saying is, had we come down and sat with them and said, "Now, in the face of the crisis that we have in Ontario, how are we going to work out a resolution to this problem? How are we going to come out of this set of problems with a way of reducing the amount of waste we're generating?" If we could sit down in a collaborative way and talk with sanity and openness, where we have got government, business, municipalities, every level, somehow participating in the solution, then we would go further toward finding solutions overall to the whole province's problems.

I sincerely hope that this Legislature will take further time to look at Bill 7 and that when it does go to committee there will be an opportunity for presentations so that we can just understand the cost implications of this bill. Let us not just again and again bring in more legislation that's going to cost the taxpayers without understanding that there are dollars associated with it.

I cannot divorce myself from the desire to have something but also the ability to pay for it. That is all we're asking for. If we were in a position to develop that kind of consensus where everybody is committed to a recycling program and committed to finding ways of making it happen, to do it without legislating things that are going to be impossible for some communities to handle, impossible for some communities to pay for because, by virtue of the withdrawal of funds from the

province—it's not going to be possible for municipalities to continue to afford it.

Let's look at the total picture. That is not being done by Bob Rae's government; it is not being done by Ed Philip. We've got a minister who is bringing forward this bill who has somehow removed himself from the Bill 143 fracas. We haven't seen or heard of Mr Philip. He has deferred the questions to the Minister of Environment, but he, as Minister of Municipal Affairs and minister responsible for the greater Toronto area, has not taken any kind of personal commitment to the issues that are being raised by our municipalities in the GTA.

He comes now with this bill. I wonder whether or not he's in a position to defend how it affects the decisions this government made with Bill 143. I am convinced he couldn't defend it, and maybe that's one of the reasons that he just kind of sidesteps the issue. We're not going to let him sidestep it. It is too important an issue. The issue that I want to make, and will continue to make with this government, is that you can't keep spending the taxpayers' money. There has to be an accounting of the cost of every piece of legislation.

We cannot continue to build the deficit in this province. We cannot continue to download responsibilities to municipalities. They cannot continue to afford to do the things that this province is demanding of them. What we have to do is find a better way of working together. I sincerely hope that through the committee process, when this bill is debated even further, we will proceed in that direction.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): I just wanted to address myself to a couple of points that the honourable member so eloquently put, and specifically to the rail haul to the Adams mine in Kirkland Lake. I'm not from Kirkland Lake but I'm from Sudbury; I'm a northerner. It comes down to how hauling garbage from Metro Toronto to the north—and I for one personally am absolutely opposed to looking after someone else's garbage.

But that brings me to another point in terms of the reduce-reuse-recycle aspect which was also mentioned by the honourable member. I was very pleased to note on the news the other night, a couple of weeks ago, that there is once-a-week pickup in some parts of Toronto now. I thought: "No wonder these people have never learned how to reduce and reuse. Forget recycling. I mean, if I had my garbage picked up twice a week, I would not have to worry about whether I had one bag or three bags or whatever." The example they used in the news coverage was a person who had something like four garbage bags full of waste ready to be transported. Of course, as long as you don't have to worry about it and you can send it to the north, then fine, you don't have to really ever learn to reduce and reuse.

1540

Recycling isn't a problem, it's quite successful, and so I point out that the focus should be on reducing and reusing rather than recycling, and we are committed to that. I know the honourable member said, "If we are all committed to recycling"—well, I think that's been shown, but I think we have to, all of us, particularly in Metro, become really committed to reducing and reusing. I don't believe that they have truly worked out their own problems. They have to start looking at it seriously.

I just thank the member for having the opportunity to speak today.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: First of all, I think the member for Markham has given a very well versed, topical review of this piece of legislation. Being the Environment critic for the last couple of years, I think there's no one who knows this issue as well on this side of the House, maybe both sides of the House, and he offered, I think, a rather fair, even-handed review of this piece of legislation.

The two issues that he touched on that I think need to be the underpinnings of a couple of his arguments are about the cost provisions involved.

There's no question the cost provisions are going to be passed on to local government, and it's a cost that you, as the provincial government, should shoulder. It's a cost that you were committed to in the past and now you're passing on to local municipalities who, with the social contract and \$500 million there and disentanglement, are left in a very, very precarious situation with respect to the financial concerns of their local municipalities.

The second concern that needs to be made very clearly is that this isn't an opt-in or opt-out program. Some of the costs are so prohibitive that a lot of municipalities, particularly smaller municipalities and counties and areas and regions around this province, simply can't afford to get involved. Unless there's going to be commitment from this provincial government to them, then it's going to be very cost-prohibitive for them as well.

Five thousand people—and this is what it goes down to—is not a lot of tax base to implement a full-scale, broad, blue box program. The regulations are suggested but there's no commitment of dollars and cents from this provincial level. There's no commitment from this government about what kind of financial help you're going to give these local municipalities. There's no financial commitment in any of this legislation that's going to tell them, "Don't worry about implementation; we'll assist and offset those costs."

Until you can prove to me by putting your money where your mouth is about the blue box and recycling program, you're just blowing hot air, in my opinion, because you're leaving the municipalities in the lurch and providing no financial assistance.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The member for Durham West.

Mr Wiseman: I'm pleased to rise today and make a few comments on the member for Markham's comments. I appreciated the tone and the contribution that he made to the debate.

I would like to raise the issue of Rail Haul North, which has been one of the issues the member has consistently raised, and also to correct the record. I've been saying it was the Ernst and Young report, but it's really the Peat, Marwick, Stevenson and Kellogg report on the economic impact study of the Ontario Northland Railway option prepared for Rail Haul North Coalition. I think the taxpayers of the greater Toronto area, and particularly Metro who would be paying these costs, would be interested in what these costs are.

The systems cost for the Adams mine development, quoting from the study, 1996 to 2016: acquisition and approval costs \$50 million; site development \$65 million; transportation costs \$780 million; container costs \$39 million; site operation costs \$156 million; existing transfer station costs \$780 million; royalty agreements and associated other costs \$267.9 million, for a grand total over a 20-year period of \$2,137,900,000 to be picked up by the taxpayers of Toronto to ship their waste up north.

In the three areas here alone—royalty agreements, transfer stations and transportation costs—there is enough money to fund twice the recycling program for all of Ontario that we are currently now doing.

I think we have to be aware of these numbers when discussing this bill.

The Acting Speaker: We can accommodate one final participant.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I want to comment briefly with regard to the presentation made by my colleague the member for Markham. The knowledge he has of Bill 143 was exposed today, and I want to say he kind of locked it in with the changes being made here and the amendments Bill 7 is making to 208.

When we talked about incineration, the member spoke of the feasibility of it being part of the overall system. He mentioned that, and I never heard anybody say too much about that.

As to the site selection in process now for Bill 143, which is the one that allows it to happen, the Interim Waste Authority, the sites under review have not had much discussion here in this Legislature with regard to Bill 7. But I've got to tell you, that site selection review that's going on, when we look at sites that are close to

Lake Simcoe, two of them just in the south part of Lake Simcoe, when we look at the great dairy farms that are being looked at for site selection, class 1 land—we had a willing host for garbage, and that is not acceptable to the government. I think a willing host should be at least looked at to see if it is feasible. You're not going to get many people who want to have a garbage site close to them, but when you've got a willing host that wants to look at it, I think it's important.

The other major issue is the overall cost of this downloading on to the municipalities. The parliamentary assistant said yesterday that there will be no cost to them. Well, I don't quite believe that. I still think there will be a cost, because when I talked to the clerk of the county of Simcoe with regard to the AMO position on it, it's not very much in favour of Bill 7. I've got to tell you that.

So in the overall picture when we're looking at this bill, I say to you I hope that there are at least two weeks set aside in committee for it to be dealt with.

The Acting Speaker: This completes questions and comments. The honourable member for Markham has two minutes in response.

Mr Cousens: I want to thank fellow colleagues in the Legislature for their comments. It's the beginning of good debate when you have a cross-section of viewpoints.

I particularly appreciated the comments from the members for Etobicoke West and Simcoe East, the sense that there's got to be common sense brought to this, and that really has been what's missing so much from government legislation ever since Bob Rae's government was elected. It makes it just about impossible for people to come forward with any point of view, because it's blocked out of consideration.

The whole issue of rail haul could be discussed and debated and reviewed within an environmental assessment. Let's not make political decisions when technical decisions can be made. Our view is simply, don't close off options where in fact you could open up that dialogue. Let the dialogue take place through a process known as the environmental assessment review, and at the end of that and in conclusion, you can come up with a decision that makes some sense.

What we argue with most vehemently is that the government makes political decisions and it will find information and substantive evidence that backs up its own point of view without giving time or sense to another point of view. If you clean up the process and rather than make all decisions politically, let that technical process go to work through an EA, then we begin to have some sense.

That's the failure of this government. It's probably the failure of our political system, because when a government's elected, as Mr Rae's is, it has such total

control of the legislative process that it pre-empts the opportunity of the opposition to do anything more than to make its criticisms known, because we will have no success in changing amendments. It takes a tremendous amount to get a government such as this to change its mind. They're very fixed in their ways, and that's really part of the whole problem of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate on second reading of Bill 7? I see none. Would the parliamentary assistant have some windup debate?

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): Yes.

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): You've got half an hour. Go for it.

Mr Hayes: I've got half an hour. I won't take half an hour, because I know there are other important bills that have to be debated in the House here.

I'd like, first of all, to thank all the people and all the members who have participated in the debate on Bill 7. I'd just like to correct the record, though. I think the member for Simcoe East got up a moment ago and said that the parliamentary assistant from Essex-Kent said there'd be no cost. I don't believe I said that; I said we would not be downloading on municipalities.

1550

I would like to say to the members talking about there being no consultation that, I'll tell you, we have had extensive consultations with municipalities, with the private management firms, with the environmental groups. And I might add that all these people and also ordinary citizens of this province have told us that we are on the right track with this waste management bill and that it's long overdue.

There were some questions and, I believe, legitimate concerns about the cost. I'm sure we will be dealing with this when this bill does go to committee.

Also, I know we talked about a couple of the amendments. One in particular is that a simple majority would make the decision from the upper tier to the lower tier about taking charge of waste management. But in committee I'm sure we'll be able to put an amendment in that will change that to two thirds. I won't go through the whole amendment at this time, but we will be prepared to do that.

I have a letter here, and I'll just take a moment to read it. It's a letter dated May 7, 1993, to the Honourable Bud Wildman, and it's from the Ontario Waste Management Association. It said:

"Dear Mr Wildman,

"I would like to make some formal comments on Bill 7.

"When we read the bill, we identified a few clauses which we considered to be somewhat ambiguous. We were concerned that, in the future, other parties, who had not been privy to the ministry's legislative intent,

might interpret these sections of the bill in a manner which had not been foreseen otherwise.

"We contacted the staff of the Ministry of Environment and Energy and at Municipal Affairs to express our concerns. We also discussed some potential changes that might be made by way of amendments. These changes, in our opinion, would eliminate these ambiguities.

"We reached agreement with your staff on what changes were needed and they are currently being prepared. Assuming that the bill is amended accordingly, it should provide the private sector with the assurances it needs to further invest in the infrastructure of Ontario's waste management and recycling industries. This renewed confidence will undoubtedly result in more employment opportunities for Ontario workers.

"The Ontario Waste Management Association is pleased to have been involved throughout the consultative process which accompanied the promulgation of this legislation. We are extremely grateful that we were given the opportunity to express our views and that our opinions were carefully considered.

"If the amendments which your ministry brings forward satisfactorily address the concerns which we have raised, and if they are incorporated into the bill, the Ontario Waste Management Association will strongly support the amended legislation."

I think that certainly says a lot for this government and how it has been consulting with not only municipalities but with the private sector, because as far as we're concerned, the private sector still plays a very important role in waste management in this province, along with this government and municipalities.

I'd just like to thank everyone and say that this bill clearly defines which level of government is responsible for waste management programs while also giving municipalities the flexibility they need to meet their local needs.

I know the member for Markham talked about a project in his riding and about how they started the recycling program. I'd certainly like to do the same as he did, compliment those people in those types of communities, because that's the kind of thing this government wants. We want the communities to get involved, with assistance from this government, and we'll certainly support that and compliment those people for having the foresight.

I'm looking forward to dealing with this bill so all members from all sides here can have input on implementing and working together to reduce the waste that goes into our landfill sites, and also to help to create jobs, because cleaning up the environment is certainly a way of creating jobs, and that is just one small factor that this government is looking forward to.

Thank you very much, and I'd like to—

Mr Stockwell: You're welcome, for heaven's sake.

Mr Hayes: Thank you, too, member for Etobicoke West. I really appreciate your input into this. It certainly helps us to drive stronger ahead.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Hayes, on behalf of the Honourable Ed Philip, Minister of Municipal Affairs, has moved second reading of Bill 7. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. We will have a 30-minute bell.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. I have correspondence here from the office of the chief government whip, room 251, Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, dated May 11, to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly:

"Pursuant to standing order 28(g), I request that the vote on Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management, moved by Mr P. Hayes, be deferred until immediately following routine proceedings on Wednesday, May 12, 1993."

Signed by Fred Wilson, and this now stands.

Hon Shelley Martel (Minister of Northern Development and Mines): I am going to move both the 14th and 13th order together. I believe we have agreement with the opposition parties that Bills 32 and 34 will be considered together, both for second reading purposes and for committee of the whole.

So I would move that the Minister of Transportation move second reading of Bill 34, and after his opening remarks, if agreeable to the House, the parliamentary assistant for the Minister of Finance will then move second reading of Bill 32 and his opening remarks will follow immediately.

The government will then skip the rotation to compensate for putting up the two speakers together, and once there are no further speakers from the opposition parties, both Mr Pouliot and Mr Sutherland will make brief closing remarks. Any votes will be taken separately.

The Acting Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent to proceed with Bills 32 and 34 simultaneously? Agreed.

VEHICLE TRANSFER PACKAGE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES DOSSIERS DE TRANSFERT DE VÉHICULES

Mr Pouliot moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 34, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Personal Property Security Act in respect of

Vehicle Transfer Packages / Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur les sûretés mobilières à l'égard des dossiers de transfert de véhicules.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Would the minister have some opening remarks?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): On June 1, 1992, this government introduced Bill 34 for first reading in this House. Bill 34 introduced a new product, now called the "used vehicle information package," to protect consumers purchasing vehicles privately.

Le projet de loi 34 a présenté un nouveau produit appelé maintenant «trousse d'information sur les véhicules d'occasion,» qui vise à protéger les consommateurs qui achètent des véhicules auprès des particuliers.

Passage of this bill will require people selling used vehicles privately to purchase the package, make it available to prospective buyers and deliver it to the buyer at the time of sale. Buyers will be required to present the package in order to transfer the vehicle registration to their name.

Mandatory use of the package should help to reduce problems in the marketplace, including unscrupulous vendors who misrepresent the previous use of vehicles or who fail to provide accurate information on the existence of lien.

Only private-sale cars, light trucks, vans, motorcycles and motor homes will be affected by this bill. We will recognize exemptions for such transactions as gifts between certain family members and sales by licensed dealers, who must satisfy the separate requirements under the Motor Vehicle Dealers Act.

Since February 1993, the information package has been available, and we have encouraged voluntary use of the package for private sales of vehicles.

1600

Our heavy agenda last fall prevented this bill from taking effect on April 1, 1993. At this time, a new date of July 1, 1993, has been set to allow the public adequate notice before mandatory use of the package is called for. The package contains a description of the vehicle, its ownership history, outstanding liens and fair market value: key information to help buyers make informed purchases.

Cette trousse contient une description du véhicule, la liste de ses propriétaires, ses privilèges — autrement dit, les dettes contractées à l'endroit du véhicule — et sa valeur marchande : des renseignements pour aider les acheteurs à faire des choix éclairés.

By requiring the use of this package, we are taking an important step towards increasing fairness in the used vehicle marketplace in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: Before we proceed with second reading by the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance, we will have questions and/or

comments.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): Mr Speaker, I think we have agreement with the opposition parties that Bills 32 and 34 will be considered together for second reading.

The Acting Speaker: This has been approved.

Mrs Caplan: That's been approved?

The Acting Speaker: Yes. We're looking for questions or comments on the minister's opening remarks.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): I just wondered why the minister is bringing this bill in. How is he going to enforce it? Are there any regulations that are going to be coming out with the bill?

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? Seeing none, the honourable minister has two minutes in response.

We now proceed with the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance.

Mr Cousens: Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Why do we have an opportunity for questions and answers, when you ask a couple of questions of the minister and he doesn't deign to answer? What a mockery that is of this place. All I asked were three questions and gave him a chance to respond, and he doesn't show the courtesy to respond.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Pouliot: On the same point, Mr Speaker: The points are well taken, but the format? Due process in the House does allow the minister to conclude at the end. The points are well taken. They will be answered meticulously, each and every question, at that specific time.

Mr Cousens: Come on. You don't know the answers. It will take you two hours to get a training session.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Point of order, Mr Speaker: I can see that clearly the minister is not ready at this time, so I'd be prepared to allow him to have staff come in and give him the answers, if that's what needs to be done.

The Acting Speaker: Order. Let us now proceed.

RETAIL SALES TAX
AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LA TAXE DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL

Mr Sutherland, on behalf of Mr Laughren, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 32, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la taxe de vente au détail.

The Acting Speaker: Would the parliamentary assistant have some opening remarks?

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Yes, I do. This bill includes changes announced by the Treasurer in the 1992 Ontario budget. Effective October 1, 1992, stricter controls made the used vehicle market fair and equitable for sellers and buyers of used motor vehicles. When a vehicle is sold privately, retail sales tax is paid on either the purchase price or the average wholesale price, whichever is greater.

There are some exceptions to this practice. Family members, such as spouses, parents, step-parents and in-laws, children, stepchildren, grandparents and grandchildren can transfer used vehicles as gifts, without paying tax. Only one such transfer per vehicle is allowed in a 12-month period.

New residents can register their motor vehicles without having to pay Ontario's retail sales tax only if proof of their previous residence outside Ontario is shown. A motor vehicle that is a gift from an estate settlement can be registered by the owner, without paying tax, when a sworn statement is shown.

People buying used vehicles from licensed dealers will continue to pay tax to the dealer on the actual selling price. A tax refund may be claimed if an appraisal shows that damage or excessive use is reason for a lower purchase price than the average wholesale price.

I will be introducing amendments to Bill 32 that will allow purchasers of used motor vehicles which have been subject to excessive use or damage in an accident to pay tax on a reduced value, rather than having the purchaser claim a tax refund, as the bill currently allows.

The first amendment applies to vehicles that have an average wholesale price of less than \$1,000. The buyer will be allowed to pay tax on the purchase price rather than the average wholesale price.

The second amendment applies to vehicles that have an average wholesale price of \$1,000 or more. If a buyer obtains an authorized appraisal prior to vehicle registration, the buyer will pay tax on the higher of the actual price paid or the appraised value, provided both are lower than the average wholesale price. If the appraisal is obtained after the vehicle has been registered, the purchaser will be required to apply for a tax refund, as provided for in Bill 32.

Licensed motor vehicle dealers are the only individuals who can collect tax on the sale of used vehicles and transfer used vehicles without paying tax to the motor vehicle licence issuer. These transfers can be made only on vehicles that are registered in the dealer's name.

The ministry will be able to release information to the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations and the Ministry of Transportation. This information is necessary to administer and enforce the collection and payment of retail sales tax.

This bill also contains administrative changes needed to carry out day-to-day operations under the act.

The definition of "transient accommodation" has been expanded to include lodging or prepared foods and lodging that are included in a paid membership to a club or organization.

This bill also clarifies that only the 8% provincial sales tax can be paid over the full term of a long-term lease or rental.

The authority to seize records during an audit is removed.

The penalty for failure to provide a complete return form is removed.

Anyone wanting a tax refund for a vehicle converted to an alternative fuel must convert the vehicle within 180 days of the purchase. The requirement for a written contract within 90 days no longer applies.

People who unlawfully obtain or attempt to obtain tax refunds or rebates will be guilty of an offence.

Finally, I will also be proposing a change to Bill 32 that gives both those individuals who buy vehicles privately and those who buy vehicles from motor vehicle dealers the same rebate opportunities under the alternative fuel-powered vehicle rebate program.

Copies of the proposed amendments, I believe, will be distributed or have been distributed to the honourable members. I look forward to their comments.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and or comments on the parliamentary assistant's opening debate?

Mrs Caplan: As I rise today to debate in some detail—

The Acting Speaker: We are still on questions and comments.

Mrs Caplan: Oh, I'll be speaking to the debate. I thought you called for further debate.

The Acting Speaker: We are on questions and comments.

Mr Cousens: On the questions and comments, with this bill coming forward now—it was given first reading on June 1, 1992. Why are we coming to second reading at this late date?

The Acting Speaker: Further questions or comments?

Mr Sutherland: If I wanted to be in my more partisan nature, I could easily say that it's because we haven't been able to get it on the agenda and have the cooperation. But we know that there have been many pieces of legislation that have had to be dealt with since this bill was introduced. They have been dealt with and we've debated them and had thorough debate and now we're at this piece of legislation today.

The Acting Speaker: Before we proceed with further debate, I have this announcement which must be

made prior to 5 o'clock. Here it is: Pursuant to standing order 34(a), the member for Mississauga South has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations concerning the Ontario Film Review Board. This matter will be debated today at 6 o'clock.

Further debate?

1610

Mrs Caplan: I've been so keen to begin the debate on Bills 32 and 34 that—

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): A lot needs to be said about it.

Mrs Caplan: There is a lot to be said about it, because these two bills, while they are entitled An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax and An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Personal Property Security Act in respect of Vehicle Transfer Packages, I believe give us an important opportunity to talk about tax policy. What I find is that very often the public does not understand fully enough the role of government and what we would sometimes call the levers of government in establishing the kinds of public policies that will have an impact on our economy.

As I've discussed, Bill 32 and Bill 34, which I have just heard the minister say are now due for implementation July 1, 1993—I think it is very important that we take this opportunity to look overall at the tax policy of the NDP government, and consider it in time and before the government plans to implement this new tax, and consider it at a time when the province is just coming out of this recession, and hopefully the government will change its mind about its tax policy.

I referred a moment ago to the levers that government has available to influence the economy. There are a number of those levers. One is through lawmaking, and we see today two bills which will become law unless the majority government of Bob Rae, the NDP, changes its mind and withdraws those bills. This is second reading debate in principle on these bills, so there is some considerable process yet and we are, as I say, discussing the in-principle component of it, so we have an opportunity today to discuss tax policy. These bills were both tabled June 1, 1992, and here we are, almost a full year later, beginning the debate in principle on second reading. So these are laws. One of the things that laws do is to say it is legal or illegal. If it is illegal, it requires enforcement or fees to be paid, and these bills do both of that.

The other thing that government can do is to levy taxes. I would like to make a statement that I think everybody in the House will agree with. That is that everybody hates paying taxes. Nobody likes taxes. Nobody likes taxes when times are good. nobody likes taxes if they are levied by the school board or by the

municipality or by the provincial government or by the federal government. It doesn't matter who levies the tax; people generally don't like paying taxes. In all of my years of public life, I've never had a constituent phone me and say, "We're really happy to pay more taxes to the government."

So I think it is fair to say that people don't like paying taxes. But the one thing I've realized after more than a dozen years in public life is that the public realizes that it is only through the collection of taxes, sometimes called "revenues," that the governments, whether it's the school board or the municipality or the provincial government or the federal government, pay for those services which are important to people. That's the reality. Without the ability to tax, without having tax revenues, there's very little the government could do in the way of providing the services that people say they want.

The question really becomes whether the taxpayers feel they are getting value for the services, value for the dollars in the form of services, whether they are getting valued and valuable services, whether they are willing to pay for those services. That's one issue.

The other is whether they feel that the taxes they are being asked to pay are fair, and "fair" leads us to a look at what kinds of taxes we have in our society. I think most people looking at Bill 32 and Bill 34 would feel that these are not particularly fair. They are what would be known as a regressive tax, as opposed to a progressive tax, because this is not based on your ability to pay in any way, so it would fall into that category of tax which would be considered regressive.

The Canadian Constitution has given different levels of government, federal and provincial, distinct taxing powers. The provinces only have the power to institute direct taxes such as sales taxes, whereas Ottawa has the right to set whatever kinds of taxes it sees fit.

For a long time after Confederation, Ottawa tended to stay out of the area of provincial taxing by primarily using trade duties as its primary taxing vehicle.

What's interesting is that the province, over the course of time, under numerous years of Conservative administration, Liberal administration and now NDP administration, has brought in many different kinds of taxes, but there are some basic taxes that we presently have as part of our structure here in Ontario and everybody's used to them. We have provincial personal income tax; we have corporate tax; we have retail sales tax; we have employer health tax; we have tire taxes and now we have, as a part of the retail sales tax and the Highway Traffic Act, taxes on used cars. We always had those, but now we have them defined in yet another piece of legislation.

What's interesting about these pieces of legislation is that they begin to discuss taxation on used cars at a

very low level. I'll get into the specific details of this bill, but I think it is important when we talk about taxes to have an understanding of the framework within which government operates when it comes to seeking revenues in all the places they can look to getting revenues in order to then pay for the services we have in the province.

What we've seen is the federal government and the provincial government over time getting into different kinds of taxes, constantly looking for new ways to tax. Ottawa has tended to act as the tax collector for both personal and corporate income taxes and these have usually been as a result of tax collection agreements.

Just for one example, Ontarians pay their personal income tax to Ottawa, who then remit the provincial portion back to Queen's Park, and other levies such as sales taxes are applied by both levels of government but collected separately and there are different administrations.

We've stood in this House on numerous occasions and talked about the burden on business that all of these different tax forms have—they've really been a tremendous burden to small business. And I have had numerous constituents, small business people in the riding, tell me that if there was anything the government could do to relieve the administrative burden on small business, it would be to eliminate some of that duplication.

I want to go on record as saying I think it is a very important thing that this government could consider doing in assistance to small business, to start to look at the amount of paperwork and duplication on taxes and tax forms that business have to fill out, and to try and streamline that procedure so the burden of filling out paper, having to hire professionals or sitting into the wee hours of the night really needing accounting courses for individual entrepreneurs to be able to fill out all of the government forms that are required to pay your taxes—is something this government could do, and what we find in Bills 32 and 34 is exactly the opposite approach because it does require additional forms to be filled out.

It's not just business that will be affected; it's the individual, it's the small transaction between two people—not through a big dealership, but just individuals who will have to go and buy the red book, find out what their car is going to be worth, fill out forms. I predict—I can tell you as sure as I'm standing here today—that when the people realize how much paperwork is involved as a result of these pieces of legislation, they're going to be very angry and very upset, because this will have an impact on the individual who just wants to sell his car. We already have a requirement for certification. We already have requirements. What this does now is require additional papers to be filled out and submitted to the government, and more forms. It adds to that paper burden, and yes, you're

going to kill a lot of trees but you're going to make a lot of people very angry because of the administrative responsibility of submitting forms to the government.

1620

One of the keys when we talk about taxation not only is in fairness but it's also the provision of, "Can we afford taxes at this time as a part of our economy?" That's very important, because what taxes do is take money out of the economy. When the government takes money, whether it is from businesses in corporate taxes, from consumers via sales taxes, from consumers via personal income taxes or from people generally, whether it's a tire tax or an employer health tax, as the government takes those revenues into the government coffers, called the consolidated revenue fund, as the government takes those dollars out of the economy, it has a number of very specific impacts.

That's why, when we discuss the total tax burden and whether or not it is time when the consumer or the business sector can cope with any more taxation—it's not only the argument that people don't like taxes at any time. It doesn't matter when it is—as I said, nobody likes taxes—but there are certain times when taxing and taxation policy are harmful and detrimental to the economic times of the province. That time is now. If there ever was a time not to bring in any new tax, it is now. If there ever was a time not to increase the rate of taxation, that time is now.

The reason that it is not the time to increase taxes is because of the fragile state of the provincial economy. It is because this province is just beginning to work its way out of one of the most devastating recessions in decades, certainly since the 1930s. At that fragile time as the economy is just recovering, the effect of taking more money out of the economy, whether it is in the form of a tax on used cars, whether it is in the form of increases in the employer health tax, whether it is in the form of an increase in the base of personal sales tax, whether it is in the form of an increase in the rate of personal sales tax, whether it is in the form of increases in the corporate tax, whether it would be in the implementation of a new wealth tax or an inheritance tax, any increase in the total tax burden of this province is madness, absolute madness.

Why? Why am I saying that? I'm saying that because if you raise personal income tax, you take money out of the hands of consumers which they could be spending, and that consumer spending would help the economic recovery. If you take money out of the hands of corporations—I say "hands" figuratively—you give them less money to reinvest in job-creating investment. If you raise your retail sales tax, you have a direct impact on retail sales, because you make the cost of that purchase higher. Consumer resistance means people will not purchase, and again, that lack of consumer confidence, that lack of consumer purchasing because of the higher

tax, means that you are affecting the economic recovery of this province, and at this time it would be madness to have any increase in the total tax burden of the province.

Is there a time to increase taxes? I will say to you, yes, there is a time. The time when you increase taxes is when everybody is doing very well, when the economy is booming, when people have a lot of discretionary income and when the demand for more services or for more income by the people delivering those services is justified. When you can afford to spend more, on the basis of your society's wealth-creating ability, then it is reasonable, and only then is it reasonable, to take taxes to pay for services, to take taxes to raise wages. That's reasonable, and every reasonable person knows that when the economy is growing, when the economy is healthy, when wealth is being created, there are certain obligations the government has and certain opportunities the government has to then tax and provide additional services that the public demands and that it wants.

But the other side of that, just as there is a time when, although nobody likes taxes, nobody wants to pay more taxes, even when times are good, at least when times are good, people understand that they're going to be either paying people more who deliver those services or they are going to be having additional services that they feel are important to them. They want those services provided, and therefore they understand if they demand those services, they have to be paid for.

So that brings us to Bill 32 and to Bill 34, because these two pieces of legislation will bring additional tax revenue to the province of Ontario right at the moment when the province of Ontario should not be taking any more tax dollars out of the economy. It's been a generally accepted rule of thumb that for every \$40,000 in new taxes taken out of the economy, you kill one job, because that money, if it were invested in the economy either through purchasing power or investment by business, would create jobs or protect jobs; that when you take that money out, you are affecting the job-creation ability of the private sector.

Therefore, as we look at Bills 32 and 34 in some detail, it's important, I believe, to remember the overall ramifications of the tax policy of the Rae government, of the NDP government, which at a crucial point in our economy is looking at a number of taxes.

Today is May 11. On May 19 we are going to have a new provincial budget. I would argue that in advance of that budget, it is premature for us to even be debating these pieces of legislation during second reading. I would have hoped that the Treasurer would have withdrawn these pieces of legislation pending his new budget. He tabled these two pieces in June of 1992. They've sat on the order paper for a year. He's got a new budget coming out. We're going to be debating the fiscal policy of the government when that new budget

comes down, and yet a week and a half in advance of that new budget we're standing here debating tax bills. To me, this says that this government has no plan, it does not understand fiscal planning, it does not understand the impact of its lack of planning on the provincial economy. The budget is a time when they bring down their plan for the next year for the province, and we should not be dealing with Bills 32 and 34 today in advance of that budget.

1630

If you want to bring in legislation affecting used car sales that are going to be implemented in July 1993, this should be incorporated in your budget and then we can debate it as part of your total fiscal plan. Why we are standing here today debating this with a budget coming down in a week and a half makes no sense to me.

However, I will address myself now to the specifics of this legislation and make the points that I would like to make. I say in advance that I know there have been a number of amendments that have been proposed. They've been proposed here in this House. We will have the opportunity to discuss it here in committee of the whole. That means this legislation will not be going out to committee for public hearings, and I frankly feel that also is something the government will come to regret. That's because public hearings give people an opportunity to come forward and talk about the provisions of new legislation that are going to affect them directly.

The sale of an automobile, a used car, affects a lot of people in this province. When they find out what they're going to have to do to comply with the new laws, they're going to say, "Why didn't anybody tell me this?" And they're not going to find out until they try to register the vehicle, the change of ownership, and they're going to be very angry. When that happens—I'm not one who likes to say, "I told you so," but I can tell the government that it had better consider today how people are going to react when they find out that without public hearings, they passed this legislation which has made them mad.

The government has made two changes to Bill 32 since the legislation was introduced last year. One change is that they have said they will accept a presale appraisal of the established value of the automobile. In the original bill, a person would have been forced to pay the tax, then get an appraisal and apply for a refund if the appraised value of the car was below its Red Book value. This change will allow people involved in the transaction to get an appraisal prior to the sale and pay the tax on the appraised value.

But how many people who are out there with another private citizen, selling their cars, are going to know or understand this until after the transaction is done? That's going to be a very significant problem and it will create a lot of confusion.

The second thing this government has done since last year when the bill was first introduced: On the transaction—that's where a car is worth less than \$1,000—the government will accept the actual sale price for tax purposes. Before this change, the original legislation, which was, in my view, terribly misguided—under the previous legislation, the person was going to be forced to pay tax on the Red Book value of the vehicle regardless of the actual value of the car.

Let me tell you what this means. Under the original proposal, it didn't matter what you paid for the car. If the Red Book value was more, you had to pay tax on the value of the Red Book, and you had to go and buy the Red Book or find it somewhere. You would only find this out when you went in to do the vehicle registration. I know that provision was upsetting a lot of people. We had a number of calls on it as people were confronted with that.

So this change says that if your car is under \$1,000 you will only have to pay the tax on the actual price you paid for the car rather than on the Red Book value, but if you pay \$1,025 you are going to have to pay the tax on the actual Red Book value, not on the price you have paid. I want to make that very clear. While the government has made changes to this legislation, it's only done this for people under \$1,000 on purchase price. You are going to have to pay tax on the actual Red Book value of your car, not on the price you have paid.

Those people who are purchasing cars of under \$1,000 will likely like these amendments, but those people who are paying \$1,001 and more are going to be very upset that the government chose \$1,000 as a level, because there are not very many cars that get sold for under \$1,000.

I would say to the minister—he's here in the House today. He seems very proud of this legislation. He's saying that this is the whole idea of the legislation. If the whole idea of this legislation is to make people mad, Minister, you will succeed. You will succeed in making people mad, I guarantee it. Wait until people understand what this legislation does.

Let me tell you some of the other things that Bill 32 does. Bill 32 makes a number of changes to the Retail Sales Tax Act. I could support a clarification of the definition of "tangible personal property." I even see that as what I would call a housekeeping kind of amendment, and if you had brought that in separately, you would have my support; I would say that's a very minor part of this bill.

There are more provisions in the bill that I can't support. Fundamentally, I can't support the legislation because it raises taxes at a time when Ontario cannot afford to have any more tax revenue taken from the economy. That's number one. But I don't support this bill for a number of reasons, and the provisions of both

Bill 32 and Bill 34 are—in the next few minutes I think it will become apparent as to why these bills are not supportable.

In April 1993 the government began offering its own information package to the public. This is information that people need to know how this legislation will work. This is information that people need to know (1) so they'll know how to fill out the form and (2) how to properly obey the law to do a simple transaction of selling their used car to another private citizen in the province.

So what has the government done? They're charging \$20 for the information package to tell people how to obey the law.

That's very offensive. Not only does it add \$20 to the cost for a purchaser who's buying a new car or a person selling their car, but here the government is saying to you: "Here's a new law. You must obey the law. We're going to tell you how, and it's going to cost you \$20 to find out how to obey the law." That's not fair, and that's what this legislation says.

We've heard a lot of people talk about what legislation is supposed to do and how it is supposed to be fair and simple for people to understand and simple for people to obey, and here is another example of the NDP government taking an issue which I think most people would say, "Well, we should do something about it," and doing it in the wrong way.

The terminology is called "curbsiding." When I first heard the term "curbsiding," I will tell you, I didn't know what it meant. I didn't understand what curbsiding was, and I bet that of the 10 million people in this province, nine million people don't know what curbsiding means.

1640

Mr Stockwell: I think that's a safe bet.

Mrs Caplan: A pretty safe bet.

Do you know what curbsiding means, Mr Speaker? I think you do now, because you've been in this Legislature and you've seen the bills that are here, but the majority of people don't know what curbsiding means. Curbsiding is the avoidance of retail sales tax in used car transactions. In other words, the government has been concerned that people have been selling their cars and deflating the prices that they paid in order to save tax.

So this whole elaborate scheme, these two pieces of legislation are designed to getcha. That's what this is designed to do: You're gonna get 'em. I'll tell you, that's going to make people take a look at you and say, what is it that you're doing? Why are they doing this?

Hon Mr Pouliot: This is consumer protection. Money is secondary.

Mrs Caplan: I hear the minister say consumer protection. Minister, do you know that in this province

before you can sell a used car, you have to get a certificate already? That's not in this legislation, but you have to provide a certificate that says that your car is drivable. A safety certificate is already required in this province. This legislation has nothing to do with consumer protection. This legislation is all about increasing taxes.

One of the reasons people are cynical in this province, one of the reasons people are cynical here, is that ministers of the crown sit down and they say, "This legislation is all about consumer protection." This legislation is about taxes.

Hon Mr Pouliot: Start telling the truth. That's your obligation. That's why people are cynical.

Mr Stockwell: He said you're not telling the truth.

Mrs Caplan: I'm sure the Speaker will want to intervene.

Hon Mr Pouliot: It's very provocative, Mr Speaker. It brings out the worst in people.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Thank you. Please.

Mrs Caplan: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

As I said, this legislation has nothing to do with consumer protection and everything about a tax grab, hiking taxes and hiking taxes at a time that Ontario can least afford a tax increase, and not only least afford it, but it is at a time when a tax increase will jeopardize our economic recovery.

Why are they doing this? The NDP has been forced to look for every possible revenue source in order to pay for its government's mismanagement of the economy since it assumed office in the fall of 1990. It's that simple.

I will agree with you that we have had some very difficult economic times. We have experienced a serious recession and we have seen a fall in revenue. But notwithstanding the fact that the Treasurer is predicting a budget which I believe is inflated at \$17 billion—I think that number is inflated, but even if he were only predicting a \$10-billion budget deficit, even if that were his prediction rather than his goal; to get the deficit under \$10 billion is his stated goal—even if that were his estimate of what he thought the deficit was going to be, I would argue that's a record of serious economic mismanagement.

We have seen three consecutive budgets from this government—

Mr Stockwell: Two.

Mrs Caplan: I'm predicting the third one. The member for Etobicoke West has said two. That's right; we've had two so far that are completed. We have a third one that is going to bring in deficits in a range which were unthinkable in this province.

While we have the former Minister of the Environ-

ment talking about what is unthinkable in the province of Ontario—she used that in the context of, “It’s unthinkable to ship our garbage to some part of Ontario,” one, that wants it and, two, where it would create jobs and be a source of economic activity. That to the NDP government is unthinkable, and that policy has been maintained by the existing Minister of Environment and Energy.

That to them is unthinkable, but let me tell you what is unthinkable to the people of this province. What was unthinkable was the prediction of \$9.9 billion as a deficit in their first budget of 1991; that was unthinkable. Then you didn’t even achieve that target; it came in \$1 billion—at \$10.9 billion.

What was unthinkable was the second budget, that similarly predicted a \$10-billion deficit and this year has come in at \$12 billion. I can’t even comprehend how this government can think that bringing in a budget with a deficit of under \$10 billion is acceptable. That is unthinkable for three years in a row in the province of Ontario. That is economic mismanagement in the extreme. What is also unthinkable is that this government would try to solve its economic mismanagement problems by raising taxes at a time when tax increases would damage and potentially cripple our recovery.

We know that the economy is recovering more slowly than most economic analysts had originally predicted. We know that unemployment in Ontario is at a high of the last decade. People are unemployed; they have lost their jobs; they have lost their businesses; they have lost their homes. Unemployment is over 11% in this province.

Youth are being denied opportunities, not just for summer jobs; that’s bad. What’s worse is youth do not have opportunities when they are prepared to enter the workforce. There are no jobs for the next generation, and we have an obligation to do what we can. Your tax policy, which is going to kill one job for every \$40,000 you take out of the economy, is killing hope for those young people who want opportunities and want jobs and want to work. They don’t want welfare. Your tax policy is killing jobs for people, not just youth, but for people who have lost their jobs and want to work and don’t want to collect welfare. That’s what this debate is about.

As the Treasurer and the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Revenue pick on private citizens selling their used cars, this is their attempt to pay in small part for the economic mismanagement of Bob Rae’s Ontario. The NDP is trying to tax its way out of its economic problems. Just as we told the Treasurer that he could not spend his way out of the recession, just as we told the Treasurer he cannot spend his way to prosperity, so I will say to him today you cannot tax your way to prosperity.

Over the last two years of this government, we have seen successive tax increases in the two budgets that

have been brought down. We told the Treasurer what the effect would be in his first budget when he was predicting a \$9.9-billion budget. We told him, “Don’t raise taxes in this budget,” but he did. As he announced he was going to try and spend his way out of the recession, we told him what the result would be. He didn’t listen. We gave him alternatives, and he didn’t listen.

Instead, he raised wages in the public sector, and the cost of that wage bill in the Ontario public service alone was 14%, and it rippled through the entire broader public sector so that here we stand, May 11, 1993, watching this government claw back, via its social contract, in an attempt to lower that wage bill to what it was in September of 1990. What they are trying to do is take back what they gave, take back what they couldn’t afford to give, take back what we told them not to give in the first place, and not only are they doing that but they are attempting, through this legislation, to tax back and to tax working people in this province who just want to sell their car.

1650

Over the last two years, not only has the Treasurer increased taxes in both budgets but the Treasurer has increased and boosted all kinds of fees, every kind of imaginable fee, to try to gather in new revenues, and still revenues continue to fall. That’s because rather than looking for new sources of revenue, what you should be doing is looking at wealth-creating initiatives, looking at sending a message to the business sector, where jobs are created, where wealth is created, and creating a climate where business can flourish in the province of Ontario, creating a climate where business wants to invest in Ontario.

So your tax policy has had exactly the opposite effect of what you had wanted it to have. Rather than giving you more money at a time of falling economic activity, your revenues are falling, notwithstanding your tax increases. So whatever plan you said you had failed, and it has been self-defeating. You’re on the treadmill. I say to the government: Get off the treadmill, because the more your Treasurer taxes, the more the economy stalls. The more you have taxed, the more slowly the economy recovers. The more you have raised taxes, the worse it has gotten. So your plan is self-defeating. Get off the treadmill. This is not the time to raise taxes.

I mentioned Ontario’s unemployment; our unemployment numbers are very high. Unemployment means that people aren’t working who want to work. The unemployment number reflects the number of people who are out there looking for jobs. What it doesn’t reflect are the numbers of people who have given up. They’ve given up looking for work because they are feeling fear, hopelessness, and that is a terrible legacy of the fiscal and economic policies of this government.

While I have said that the economic recovery has

begun, the economic outlook, as a result of the policies of Bob Rae and the NDP government, is bleak. The predictions are high unemployment and slow growth over the next little while. I would say to this government that there are some things that you could do that would give people hope and not crush the hope that is there.

One of the things that you could do is make a commitment to not increase taxes at this time. One of the things that you could do is pull Bills 32 and 34 and bring back those portions of the bills that do with the housekeeping things, that fix the definitions, but leave out of them those parts of it which take additional revenue out of the economy through higher taxes.

An oxymoron is a contradiction in terminology; most people know that. I remember the day that the NDP talked about its recovery plan. There were many of us who were actually quite hopeful, until we looked at it and realized "NDP recovery plan" is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms to the people of this province, because you can't look at one policy in isolation from the rest. Bill 40 has scared off investors and businesses, high deficits have shocked taxpayers and the heavy-handed tactics of the NDP have destroyed confidence, not only of consumers, but of your very own civil service. Morale is at an all-time low in the Ontario public service.

The politicization of the civil service, the appointment of David Agnew as the top civil servant in the province—David Agnew, Bob Rae's campaign manager; David Agnew, Bob Rae's chief of staff—as the number one civil servant, the secretary to the cabinet, sent shock waves through Ontario's public service and signalled a politicization unlike we have seen in this province. Never before have we seen this kind of behaviour in this province.

Mr Sutherland: Come on; 42 years of Tory rule and it wasn't politicized? Give me a break.

Mr Stockwell: It wasn't; not like you jerks.

Mrs Caplan: I hear the members opposite saying the Tories did this, and I will say to Mr Sutherland—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: I see that I hit a nerve, but I'll tell Mr Sutherland, the member for Oxford, that even in the worst days of Tory abuses and patronage—and there were some bad ones—what you have done surpasses anything which they ever did in the way of politicization of the civil service. A professional, non-partisan civil service has been a hallmark of this province, you have systematically destroyed that in the last two years and you will rue the day for doing that.

There is not a day goes by that I do not hear from yet another one of your employees how morale has suf-

fered, how the civil service feels that you have been at war with it and how you are infiltrating the civil service with patronage, political appointments in a way which the civil service feels and I feel have betrayed the public trust. But I do digress.

Incompetent economic policymaking, incompetent economic policy direction, incompetent economic and fiscal policy, has been a hallmark of the Rae government from day one. This used car tax needlessly complicates a simple, private transaction between individuals; it's as simple as that. Bills 32 and 34, let me say it again, needlessly complicate simple, private transactions between individuals: one who wants to sell a car; the other who wants to buy a car. Forcing people to buy information packages and deal with government bureaucracy for refunds and reassessments muddles private business transactions between individuals in a way which will boggle the mind and infuriate the public and infuriate my constituents in the riding of Oriole and infuriate your constituents right across this province.

Just to add a lighter note, when I was discussing this with a constituent, the person said, "You know, years ago the big debate was over whether or not government belonged in the bedrooms of the nation," but in fact what this person said was that he didn't believe the NDP has any place in the garages or at the curbsides of this province. I thought it was quite an amusing comparison.

1700

This legislation, I will say once again, needlessly complicates a simple private transaction between an individual who wants to sell his car and an individual who wants to buy that car. This is not about consumer protection. The law today already requires a certificate of safety. The law today already requires the individuals to pay tax on that car; it already is a requirement, and this legislation complicates that very simple process.

The NDP government is forcing people to spend \$20 for an information package. Let me tell you, they want them to pay \$20 for valuable information. The valuable information they want them to have is how to pay higher taxes, higher retail sales tax on their car. In order to get them to pay a higher retail sales tax, they're charging them \$20 for the information. This makes sense to the NDP. This makes sense.

People must buy the Maclean Hunter Red Book or, after that, April 1993, provided the government has its information package available—the reason they have to buy it is to ascertain the proper value of their used car. Not only are the individuals paying more retail sales tax, they're also paying more to find out the information about what their car is going to be worth so that they can pay more retail sales tax, and the government thinks this is sound policy. The government of the day thinks that's good policy, Mr Speaker. I think you should already be convinced and I think the people of this

province should be convinced at the lack of any kind of thought and planning going into these pieces of legislation.

I would like to spend just a few moments on Bill 34. Under the rules of the House, as the critic for the ministry of revenue, normally I would have a considerable period of time to speak on both of these pieces of legislation. But in order to work cooperatively and constructively with the government, we have agreed to deal with these two pieces of legislation at the same time, and therefore I'm going to be using my 90 minutes of debate to debate both of these pieces of legislation at the same time. I just wanted to point that out to you, Mr Speaker, because people are often not aware of the rules of procedure of the House, and that's why I will be discussing this all at one time and having the two pieces of legislation discussed at the same time.

Let me tell you a little bit about Bill 34, which is also receiving second reading at this time in this session of the Legislature. Bill 34 is called An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and the Personal Property Security Act in respect of Vehicle Transfer Packages. This was also tabled June 1, 1992, and it is a companion piece of legislation to Bill 32, the legislation I've been discussing for the last few minutes.

Bill 34 was the bill that was tabled to implement the provisions which were in last year's budget. I'd make the same point about Bill 34 that I made about Bill 32. We have a new budget coming down in a week and a half, on May 19. If you still wanted to do this, it should be part of your overall fiscal plan. These bills should be withdrawn and they could be tabled again, hopefully in a different form, after your budget of next May 19, a week and a half from now. You still have time to do that, and that's my advice to this government so that the people will have some confidence that you're dealing with a complete fiscal plan for the province, not a piecemeal approach.

This is a leftover from last year. You're hoping that people will not notice, and it is not true. They're going to notice it. It didn't have an impact last year; it will have an impact this year, and it will also affect the other things that you are going to be doing in the budget. This should be debated as part of your overall budgetary plan. I can't make that point too strongly.

Bill 34 requires that every Ontarian selling a used car must buy a vehicle transfer package from the Ministry of Transportation. That's what Bill 34 says. Let me read that again. In fact, let me find the clause. It amends the Highway Traffic Act, and it says in section 11.1:

"Every person who sells, offers for sale or transfers a used motor vehicle shall provide a valid vehicle transfer package in respect of the vehicle for inspection by proposed purchasers or transferees and shall deliver the package to the purchaser or transferee at the time of sale or transfer of the vehicle."

Section 11.1(2) says: "The ministry shall issue a vehicle transfer package in respect of any used motor vehicle to any person who applies therefor and pays the prescribed fee."

Ah, this is interesting. This is a law, and it says that if you want to sell your used car, you must buy from the Ministry of Transportation a vehicle transfer package and you have to present this at the time that you transfer the ownership. The package will contain a registration history of a car or a truck, along with other information, and the minister says this is a consumer protection package because it will also list such things as outstanding liens and so forth.

I would say to the minister that as long as people have this opportunity available to them, the rule of caveat emptor—I believe people who are buying a vehicle understand that they have an obligation to check this out. They can find this information out if they choose to. But you are legislating in this legislation that whether they want to know or not, if they know the person who owns the car and it's their best friend and they live next door and they trust each other, you are mandating that they have to buy a vehicle information package even if they don't want one.

This is an intrusion. This is exactly the kind of intrusion that people resent. They say to government: "Get off my case. Get off my back. Don't tell me what I have to know before I can buy a used car. If I want to find out about it, I'll find out about it." They are an adult person. As long as they know where to go to get the information—

Mr Stockwell: Caveat emptor.

Mrs Caplan: What caveat emptor means is, "Let the buyer beware." People are not asking you for this protection. They don't want this. This is a tax grab. They know this is a tax grab.

I will say again that this government is complicating a private transaction. The transfer package which the seller must buy will cost \$20, and the government expects to receive \$13 million a year from the sale of the vehicle transfer package. I'm going to predict what the result will be. Consumers will become more confused by the introduction of the vehicle transfer package.

Red books and other government-imposed hurdles will just further upset and complicate a private transaction when they go to sell their car. In an era when governments around the world are moving away from excessive regulation, this NDP government is trying to impose more government red tape and hopelessly complicate even the simple sale of a used car from one individual to another.

1710

I spoke before about the levers government has. I said economic and fiscal policy is a very important one.

Taxation policy is very important. Legislation—what's legal and illegal—is very important. The other one is the ability to regulate, which says: "You will fill out the following 250 forms. You must fill these forms out and you must sometimes pay a fee and sometimes not pay a fee." When a fee is involved, you have to stand accountable for why you are charging this fee.

As recently as just last week, I went to update my driver's licence, to get my 1994 sticker. What I found out is that everything is computerized at the ministry. The information is all there. I stood in line. It was actually quite efficient. It didn't take very long at all. I stood in line for a few minutes. I handed in my forms. They punched everything up in the computer. I paid the fee to get my new licence and my ownership for 1994.

I spoke to the people. The office happens to be in the riding of Oriole and they're very nice people who man the office. They were very polite and very helpful. But one of the things that I realized when I was there was that all of this information that the minister would like to sell for \$20 is available in those computers today. All they have to do is punch it up like that. They could tell you at that time, without any problem, that there's no lien on the car. It's there. It's not going to cost them a nickel more to provide it for you. The system is in place. Therefore, this is a very thinly disguised tax grab. That's all it is.

The vehicle transfer package is yet another tax. The government's mismanagement of the economy has forced the Treasurer to look for every possible source of new revenue and to attempt to disguise tax grabs in a way which is making people angry and making them cynical. They say to me, "Don't tell me this is about consumer protection. This is about increasing taxes," and they're right. The vehicle transfer package is about tax increases and \$13 million for the government at a time—do you know how many jobs will be affected by taking \$13 million out of the economy in this tax grab? The arithmetic is very simple: Divide \$40,000 into \$13 million and you'll see how many jobs this tax will kill.

In the case of the used car tax, not only does the government gain more in retail sales tax revenue—that's Bill 32—but Bill 34 says it's going to get \$13 million for a vehicle transfer package that many people don't want, don't need, or which could be provided as a free service when you do your transfer. To require people to pay for this when the information is there already, at a time when they're already feeling overburdened, just increases voter anxiety, increases taxpayer anxiety and makes people mad. At least have the guts to stand up and call it like it is and say, "We're going to raise taxes." Don't disguise it in the form of a vehicle transfer package. Utter nonsense.

The new tax system as proposed by Bill 34 is also unfair. It's unfair to used car buyers and to people who are selling their used cars. I think it's sad, because we

hear Bob Rae day after day talking about fairness, yet when we see what he is doing, we see him bringing forward proposals and policies and schemes which are unfair. This new scheme forces sellers to purchase an unnecessary vehicle transfer package and it forces buyers to pay for the cost of that car on the basis of the past history of the car or the truck.

Bills 34 and 35 are unfair. They're unfair because they are regressive. They're unfair because they force consumers to buy something they may not want. They're unfair because they complicate what should be a simple transaction.

This new regime as proposed by Bill 34 forces the purchaser to claim a tax rebate. Buyers will face all kinds of new red tape trying to get a rebate.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: I think this is an important bill in this House and I don't see a quorum. The government can't even feel it's responsible to have the proper representation.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Would you please check if there is a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is present. The member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. The point that I'd like to make on the rebate foreseen in this legislation is that this is how it's intended to work. If the buyer of the used car believes that he or she has paid tax based on an overinflated assessment of the car, then the person must have an appraiser estimate the true value of the car and then the buyer must appeal to the government for a refund. By overcomplicating this transaction, by forcing people who think they've overpaid to go and get an appraisal, to get into paperwork, one, they're simply not going to do it, which is, I think what you know is going to happen—they won't do it—and second, it's going to cost them money to get an appraisal to find out whether or not they've overpaid, and that's just not fair.

This provision of the legislation raises false hope. It says to people, "Well, if you think you've been over-taxed or charged too much, you can go and get an appraisal, and there will be remedy and there will be redress." It'll never work that way.

One of the things that the government has to consider when it brings forward proposals like this is, is it practical? Will it work? What's going to be the result of this? The result will be frustration and anger and cynicism, because this is so unfair and it's unjust. People are going to look at this and say, "You told me I could do this and I tried to do this," and there's so much red tape they're going to say, "Get off my back."

I'd like to repeat the point because it's an important

one. At a time when governments in North America, governments in Canada, governments around the world are looking at how they can ease the regulatory burden, one of the new bits of language of the last few years has been the term "deregulation," and it's also fraught with debate and discussion. I'm not suggesting that it's an easy subject. It's not. It's a difficult subject to discuss. But at least everybody is comfortable with the underlying principle of deregulation which says: "Don't regulate if you don't have to. Ease the burden on business; ease the burden on the individual consumer wherever possible. Don't do things that are unnecessary."

All kinds of procedures the government undertakes every day are found to not benefit anybody at all. Everywhere governments are looking at streamlining and simplifying, looking at everything they're doing to make it more understanding, less complicated, more reasonable, less onerous, less intrusive, less bureaucratic, less expensive. And what's the NDP doing? Adding another regulation, adding yet another obligation, adding another piece of paper, adding another regime and more red tape. It shows how out of touch and how misguided and how unfair this government is.

1720

I was reading with interest an article that I'd like to share. It's a short article. It's an article that an accounting firm published for their clients, and this is what they had to say about "Ontario: Province of Opportunity?":

"On April 23, 1993"—this is timely; this was just last month—"Premier Bob Rae summarized the New Democratic Party government's \$8-billion total deficit reduction plan by saying, 'It can't be business as usual.'

"It can't be business as usual? What planet has Rae been visiting for the last two years? How many of us recall the NDP's philosophy of spending its way out of the recession without any regard for the deficit? Who remembers that this was implemented when the federal government and most of the provinces were introducing budgets based on restraint?

Mr Paul Klopp (Huron): Oh, get out of it.

Hon Mr Pouliot: Who were the big spenders when the money was rolling in?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, order. Please, I would ask all the members to take their own seats. Perhaps we'll be able to control the order a little more. Minister. Please take your seats. The member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. As I was saying, and as I was quoting when I was interrupted by the interjections of the minister—and I'm going to read the last sentence again so that it is in context. They're asking a number of questions. This is a major accounting firm in the city of North York in a newsletter to their clients; these are their words. They

say, "Who remembers that this was implemented when the federal government and most of the provinces were introducing budgets based on restraint?" They're referring to the NDP philosophy of spending its way out of the recession and not having any regard for the deficit. Then they say, "We see a lot of hands raised out there." In other words, they know a lot of people remember your policies of spend the way out of the recession at a time when the rest of the world was bringing in budgets of restraint.

I continue. It says: "Many of us have been demanding restraint for two years," and I would add that I have been echoing those calls for restraint for two years. I continue by quoting, and it says:

"Thankfully, the government has finally found the financial savvy to recognize it better implement deficit-reduction measures before the province files for bankruptcy.

"But tax increases!

"Obviously our provincial politicians don't pay for the drugs they've been taking. Clearly an increase in taxes will seriously undermine the fragile economic recovery and impede job creation."

These are the words of professional accountants practising in the city of North York. They go on to say:

"Although Laughren hasn't said where the tax hikes will come from, we can speculate they will result from two sources. While we believe the government will be reluctant to raise the overall sales tax rate, this 8% tax may be extended to most currently exempted goods and services such as professional fees, books and children's clothing.

"Ontarians are subjected to a two-tier surtax. The first surtax, imposed at a rate of 14% of Ontario tax, kicks in at about \$49,000 of taxable income, while a second 6% surtax (for a total of 20%) is applied when taxable income reaches about \$65,000.

"We believe the government intends to continue its attack on this higher-income group. Instead of raising the Ontario tax rate, which would affect the entire population, Laughren will increase these surtaxes. Don't be surprised if they hit 30%.

"On the bright side," these accountants are saying, "We don't think the NDP government will introduce a wealth tax or inheritance tax. While the annual tax haul might help get the province's finances in shape, we believe even this government is not that myopic.

"Economically, the negative impact of either of these taxes would drain whatever investor confidence remains. Politically, these taxes would not likely survive an election and would, therefore, only be temporary measures.

"After living through these NDP years, we often ask," and I quote, "'What happened to this province of opportunity we used to sing about?'"

These are the words of professional accountants in the city of North York as they predict what the Treasurer is likely going to do in this next budget. These accountants have not even mentioned Bills 32 and 34, because—

Mr Curling: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The members of the government will understand. I don't think there's a quorum.

The Deputy Speaker: Would you please check if there is a quorum?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is present. The member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. As we debate Bills 32—

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): On that point of order, Mr Speaker: There have been a number of times when that member has stood up, and having counted the members in the House himself and knowing there was a quorum, he's just simply using it as a tactic to allow the other member to catch up on her speech, because she's just reading from a document. Mr Speaker, we recognize it—

The Deputy Speaker: Please take your seat.

Mr Perruzza: I hope you recognize it as well.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Oriole.

Mrs Caplan: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think my comments are relevant, because as I began this debate on these two tax bills, I said that I believed the issue was broader than simply these two bills. It was important to look at Bill 32 and Bill 34 in the context of the fiscal reality in Ontario today, to discuss them in the context of the total tax plan, that is, the budget of the province of Ontario, and in order to understand what's happening in the province today we have to hear what people are saying.

1730

One of the things that sometimes happens here at Queen's Park is that we don't listen well enough to what the public is saying. We certainly know that often the government doesn't hear what the professionals of the province are saying; for whatever reason, it has been anti-business and anti-professional. But I can say to you that it is important for the government to understand the impact of every one of its tax bills, it is important for the government to understand the impact of its legislation, it is important for the government to understand the impact of new regulations and how much people hate red tape. They hate red tape. They don't want you to bring in legislation that's going to increase red tape. They want you to bring in policies that are going to eliminate red tape. I believe that the public is right to want red tape eliminated, and Bill 32 and Bill 34 do not do that.

I had a constituent—if you want to know how people are feeling, let me tell you what this constituent had to say. He said, "Bob Rae and Mike Harris would like to introduce the Frank Lorenzo school of management for dealing with labour." He said, "Their approach would abrogate contracts and unilaterally slash payrolls."

Let me tell you who Frank Lorenzo was. Frank Lorenzo took over an airline company in the United States in the early 1980s and within two years put it into bankruptcy, fired all the workers and hired them back at less pay.

This is what my constituents are saying about the way that this government and about the way that Mr Harris, in his support for Mr Rae, are being seen by the public. The approach of the NDP and Bob Rae has been to make mistakes and then panic, panic and try to correct those mistakes. Mr Harris's approach, Mike Harris's approach, is to say whatever sounds politically expedient at the moment, to tell people what you think they want to hear, even though you know you're not going to be able to do it the way you said you were going to do it, and that increases cynicism.

At this time in Ontario's history, as our economy is just beginning to recover, we don't need the Frank Lorenzos of this world in Ontario. We don't need his clones, and we certainly don't need those kinds of approaches sitting on the government benches in the figure of Bob Rae. We don't need the public losing confidence. We don't need the public having less money in their pockets to spend. We need consumers to have more confidence and to begin spending. We know that we need the business sector to feel that there are opportunities to earn a profit. "Profit" is an important and good word. Profit is about wealth creation. No matter how much you tax, unless you understand—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mrs Caplan: Unless the government members—and I see that I have provoked some of them—begin to understand how you create a climate of confidence, until you begin to understand how you create a climate where wealth can be created, until you understand how important your taxation policies and your economic policies are in affecting consumer confidence and business confidence, until you understand that Ontario is at a very fragile time of its recovery, until the public believe that you understand all of those things, they will have no confidence in your Premier, they will have no confidence in the members of your cabinet and they will have no confidence in the NDP and its ability to govern.

What has become clearer, whether we are looking at Bill 32, Bill 34 or other pieces of government legislation, whether they are revenue bills, mini-budgets or procedures, when we see this government's approach, we know it is in a crisis-management mode, that it is in

a state of panic and chaos and confusion. Instead of instilling confidence, it is instilling lack of confidence.

These bills before us today are one more example of a lack of a cohesive plan. These bills today are one more example of your inability to manage the affairs of the province. These pieces of legislation are not worthy of support, and they are not worthy of support because not only is it the wrong time to raise taxes, but if you're going to present an economic plan in 10 days, these are the kinds of proposals that should be part of that comprehensive plan.

So it is with frustration on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Oriole that I stand in this House today debating two revenue bills which are going to increase taxes just at a time when the public is starting to feel there might be a recovery and everyone, every sensible policy analyst, is saying to you, "Don't raise taxes now."

Admit you made mistakes when you assumed government. Admit that you made those mistakes. Stand up and say, "We made a mistake." We want to help you. We offer ideas and suggestions to you. You just don't listen.

It's my hope that over the course of the debate of these two pieces of legislation the government may decide that the approach of withdrawing these pieces of legislation until after the budget has been presented is a far wiser plan. It would make me feel more secure and my constituents feel more secure if they knew you had a plan that was comprehensive and well-thought-out.

As you can tell, I will not be supporting Bill 32 and Bill 34 when we have the vote on second reading, and I thank the members of this House today for their attention.

The Deputy Speaker: Question or comments? The member for Markham.

Mr Cousens: I see that the honourable member didn't use her full time. I just want to congratulate her for that magnanimous and generous effort. With an hour and a half to go, there was one minute left. We're really pleased with that.

As I was listening to her last words, first of all the honourable member for Oriole was pleading to the government, "Admit you have made a mistake"—to hear that coming from that member. Then she went on to say, "You just don't listen," and the passion that came through from the member for Oriole was enough to wake me up and get me on my feet in these latter moments of the House, because those very words could have been echoed from one of the socialists about the Liberals when they were in power; indeed, the very minister sitting there taking it all in. It's the kind of comment he would have said to the member for Oriole when she was Minister of Health: "You just don't

listen. Admit you've made a mistake."

The fact is, I didn't hear the honourable member for Oriole go into the detailed history of the Liberal Party when it had a chance to do things right. They didn't do it right then, and yet there is no recognition at all of all the 33 taxes that government brought in under Bob Nixon and Mr David Peterson. Talk about sleaze, talk about two-handedness, talk about—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Only one speaker at a time, and that's the member for Markham.

1740

Mr Cousens: Are you going to extend my time, Mr Speaker, because I could have some more fun at their expense. The fact is the Liberals are in the marvellous position to remember the recent past and what's going on. They have a very convenient memory that disallows them to face up to the truth of the very serious consequences we're suffering today because of the days when they were in power.

Mr Perruzza: I want to go back to a comment that the Liberal member for Oriole said just a few short moments ago in a rather long-winded speech that spanned almost the entire afternoon. She talked about restraint. She has been asking for restraint, and these are her words, and I will get Hansard on this later, she has been asking for restraint for the last two years. Well, let me tell you a little bit about the kind of restraint that she asked for when she was the Minister of Health for—she had a number of portfolios—about five years. I'll tell you what they did.

They looked everywhere, and everything they saw and everything they touched they taxed. They saw a tire, they taxed it. They drove into a parking lot, and they said, "This is a great place to tax," and they taxed that too. They went and they shopped and they said: "We get a sales tax. It's seven cents; let's raise it to eight." That's a 15% increase on tax; that's another tax. They went and they said, "I need a pack of cigarettes." They said, "Oh, Jeez, I can tax this too." So they cranked that one up as well. They filled up, and what did they do? "Gas. What a great thing to tax is gas, so let's crank that up as well." So they taxed, and they taxed to the level of what, 32 or 33 times over five years? They spent and they spent and they spent. Did they set aside a rainy day fund for a depression or for a recession? Absolutely not. They didn't think that far.

The Deputy Speaker: On a point of order, the member for Nepean.

Mr Perruzza: There was no plan—

The Deputy Speaker: I'd like to remind the member for Downsview that when you are called to order, you should take your seat. The member for Nepean, you have a point of order.

Mr Daigeler: I think, on a point of order, we just

should remind the member that we do have a loud-speaker system in this House, and he doesn't need to yell.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Scarborough North, you have the floor.

Mr Curling: I just want to commend the member for Oriole for the very excellent and thoughtful speech that she gave. My concern is that although the comments were very thoughtful, I don't think one member of the government heard a word. The fact is that they never listen to things. I hope they have a second chance. They have a chance to read the Hansard, and I would recommend to them that although you may get bored in five minutes, spend that five minutes on some very, very thoughtful points that the member for Oriole has made.

I just want to address a bit to the member for Markham. The member for Markham—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Scarborough North, please take your seat. The member for Yorkview, I would ask you to refrain.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Minister, the member from Geraldton, the member for Downsview, the member for Yorkview, members. The member for Scarborough North.

Mr Curling: Although the government is doing its tactics by killing my time, I just want to address the member for Markham, who seemed to have his focus redirected a funny way. It is the government that is doing these awful things. You seem to want to direct to the Liberals. I understand your desperation, hoping that you will win the next election, but that won't help you. It will be about policy and about consistency, what the Liberals have always offered.

The member for Downsview, who seemed to talk about how we taxed everything: I didn't hear one word about your rollback. If you feel we have taxed so much, where's this government rolling back these taxes?

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Your time has expired. The member for Etobicoke West, you have two minutes.

Mr Stockwell: I'll try and bring this debate back to a sane and rational one.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Be very calm, Chris.

Mr Stockwell: I am, in my non-bombastic fashion. What we're speaking about—

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Saturday Night Live.

Mr Stockwell: I again comment, the member from Mississauga is heckling me, and I'll ignore him.

What we're talking about here is a piece of legislation that has been disguised, in my opinion, as protection for the consumer. What I think this is, is a piece-meal basis. They've tried to piece off a certain industry in hopes of gaining significant revenue increases and a tax grab.

I don't think there has been a huge cry out there by the private sector or the consuming public that when they go out and buy a car, they need a package of everything that's ever taken place with that car, whether the muffler's been changed or a tire's been changed, or whether they've bought a used part instead of a new part to replace a carburetor. What it comes down to—

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): Car dealers love this legislation.

Mr Stockwell: You'll get your opportunity. You're the parliamentary assistant, so you must have something to do, and you'll get an opportunity to speak to this.

I think the whole thrust of this piece of legislation is another opportunity to pawn off on the public this government's ability, or inability, to suggest it's protecting the public from unscrupulous behaviour. Well, I don't get a lot of complaints about this. I get a lot more complaints about the fact that you've overtaxed, over-regulated, all kinds of industries, not "I want a package when I buy a 1990 car about who changed the lug nut on the spare tire."

That's what we're talking about here. It's a tax grab by a ministry that shouldn't be out there taxing and grabbing; it should be assisting the consuming public.

Mrs Caplan: I'm pleased in the two minutes that are remaining to respond to the comments that were made by members of the Legislature about my remarks. I'd like to just point out, particularly for those members opposite, what the record of economic management was between 1985 and 1990 that had them so exercised.

Ontario experienced the strongest economic growth in North America. Over 700,000 jobs were created, and along with those jobs, wealth was created. We had consecutive balanced operating budgets that began in 1987-88, and we were paying for capital out of our operating expenditures from 1988 on. We had a debt repayment for the first time in 40 years in this province of \$430 million, and after 15 years of Tory debts and deficit building up, we had the first fully balanced budget in 1989-90.

We know the Provincial Auditor has attested to that.

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): Dismal.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Cambridge, please.

Mrs Caplan: Those are the facts and, Mr Speaker, let me tell you what these people inherited. They inherited a triple-A credit rating. So for all of their protestations about economic management, I stand here in my place today, and I will stack up the record of the

Liberal government from 1985 to 1990, all of it, to anything that you have done and anything that you will do in your five years in office, and I will stack it up against anything that the Conservatives did in the five years before us, and I'll go back even further than that. When you want to look at a record of economic management in this province, the years between 1985 and 1990 will be seen as days of sound, competent fiscal management.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate? The member for Markham.

1750

Mr Cousens: Really, what we've heard in this House, for most of today, shows how irrelevant the Legislature really is. Just to point it up, we're dealing with two bills at one time. They have nothing in common with each other except that they're in their 30s and were brought in the House on June 1, 1992, which is almost a year ago. One comes under the Ministry of Transportation and the minister is sitting here. One comes under the ministry of revenue and the parliamentary assistant is here.

But what else do they have? They're different bills. One's a tax bill and one's another bill. People come along and they say, "What are you doing in the Legislature?" "We've put these two together." "Why?" "To clear up the backlog of some of the things the government wasn't able to schedule when it could have scheduled it." You've changed the rules in the Legislature so that we're hardly able to debate or deal with the issues anyway and now you come along and you're trying to shove these under the door.

The Legislature is irrelevant, is my beginning point. What do we have to do here? The government operates by fiat. It's a one-party government. They've been elected since September 6. They come out with their policies and their guidelines and then, eventually, they come to the Legislature to deal with them. We haven't dealt with Sunday shopping. The government brought in all the changes. They gave advice to the Solicitor General, "Don't ticket them any more; they can be open on Sunday," but we haven't dealt with the legislation in the Legislature.

This is a government that comes along and makes all kinds of announcements. They go and do their own thing and then come back here. What do they want us to do? Rubber-stamp it; just a bunch of rubber stamps. We come along here and we're supposed to say, "We've got Bills 32 and 34 today and we're going to deal with that." I happen to have the sense, having been around here 12 years, to know that I'm not going to have much impact on the New Democrats, because the New Democrats haven't modified a position or a bill or an issue since they came to power.

They don't listen to the people. They're operating by themselves for themselves, for their own groups. When

they do make a change of some kind, it's the lobby of great power. The insurance industry comes in upon them and then they realize that the auto insurance shouldn't go ahead, so they put on the brakes and then go for a walk by the waterside and come out with another position. Or they come along and they'll change their position on casinos. At one time they have a great self-righteous position, but then they see it as a way to make some money, so they'll go and do it.

Here is a government that is as inconsistent as anything you've ever come across, but what does it do? They use the legislative floor to just push through their agenda. It's a mockery of the legislative process as people have come to appreciate it since its inception, because really what we are able to do here is at least make an effort to put on the record our concerns about the government, its initiatives, its policies, what it's doing and why it's doing it. But as for having any impact on what they're going to do, tragically we are not able to change them from their path.

That's terrible. The level of confidence that's now in the minds and hearts of the people of Ontario is dreadful because, unfortunately, the New Democrats are giving all politicians a bad name by virtue of the way in which they have come to power and the way they use that power.

When I say, "Come to power," when you come to power you set out some expectations of what you stand for and what you're going to do. When in fact you renege on your promises, your word isn't worth very much at that point. The public of Ontario suddenly realized that those very people who were out criticizing the Liberals or the Conservatives for raising taxes and causing other problems are now the ones bringing into this House more regulations, more taxes.

Why do I think it's irrelevant? Tragically, it's irrelevant because we know how every vote is going to go in this House. The New Democrats have sufficient power. They whip their members so that they are present in the House for every vote and there isn't a chance that this government will lose a vote till 1995, when it has to go back to the people of Ontario and face the people to ask them how they want to vote.

That's the problem we've got in this House, because once a party is given a majority such as this one has, we are stuck with it. I have many, many people who say: "Do something to stop them. Can you do something to bring some common sense to them?" In spite of the tremendous efforts from members of our caucus, the New Democrats are not prepared to listen.

I found it so irrelevant as well to listen to the member for Oriole, because how speedily her memory has gone from the days from 1985 to 1990. When you start asking yourself, how many tax increases were imposed by the Liberal government from 1985 to 1990—how many?

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Thirty-three.

Mr Cousens: Thirty-three. Hey, no answer from the Liberals. I mean, they're not prepared to remember any of those tax increases, at least to show you're listening. The New Democrats remember that there were 33 tax increases. You'd never have thought that when you listened to the member for Oriole, because it was as if this is the first time there has been a tax increase. They've forgotten the days when they taxed us almost to death.

You want to ask another question? Is the percentage of annual increase in Liberal spending—

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: Whose side is who on around here?

Mr Cousens: I want to make a few points at the expense of the Liberal Party, because when they can stand in this House and pontificate about government spending and taxes and forget conveniently what they did to the province of Ontario during their five-year tenure, I suggest that it's only correct and good and proper that we remind them of those days and years. Because the people of Ontario said something to Mr David Peterson and his group on September 6. Unfortunately, the people at that time didn't support the Conservative Party, but the fact of the matter is that people begin now to recognize us for what we are and what we stand for, the consistent record. They're looking back to the 42 years as having been a time when there was good leadership, good administration, fiscal responsibility.

People are beginning to see in our leader, Mr Mike Harris, the qualities of a leader who will lead the province into the future. They recognize him for one of honesty and integrity, and that is really how people are going to select their governments in the future. The amount of loyalty that people have to the past isn't all that great. They want to see people who are genuine in their beliefs and genuine in their commitment to follow through on something.

What I see in the presentation by the member for Oriole is a tremendous lack of consistency, because as she talked, she was almost judgemental to the point where it's as if all the problems we have today stem from the New Democrats. What she's failed to realize and failed to face up to is the tremendous havoc wreaked upon the province of Ontario during the years of the Peterson reign, which was made possible because of the accord of the New Democrats and the Liberals.

You know, when you start looking at the increase in taxes that we have gone through in the last number of years—I'd like to just point out another couple of statistics. The percentage increase in government spending from 1985 to 1991 was 100%. Government spending went up 100% in a six-year period. The percentage increase in general tax revenue in the same period went up by 124%. That's a 124% increase in the

general tax revenue in the period of 1985 to 1991. The percentage increase in personal income tax revenue in the same period: 156%. The result, then, is that we would almost think it's time to have a tax holiday for people in the province of Ontario, and the New Democrats who came in with such a sense of doing something right, here they're bringing forward more tax increases to the people of Ontario, and that has us angry.

We are going to fight this government on their tax increases, the tax increases they tried to impose last year and still haven't legislated, and we're going to be fighting them on the tax increases that they're going to be bringing in next week when they bring out their budget. We will oppose the tax increases. We can't afford more tax increases. The province of Ontario is already fed up with taxes. We've got to stop raising taxes, and here today again you're coming in with another tax increase.

The people of Ontario have had it. They've had it with all of us as politicians. Yes, sir. They want us all to cut back and stop our spending, stop increasing expectations, reduce it, pull it down, and they're expecting me to do something about it. And I'm going to do everything I can to persuade you to cut back and turn the corner back to the days when Ontario was a prosperous place and we had something to be proud of. We're not proud of the way in which you're spending our money. We're not proud of the way in which you're grabbing our money. We're not pleased at all with the fact that here today you're trying to legislate another tax hike.

Mr Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 34, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

1800

ONTARIO FILM REVIEW BOARD

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): The member for Mississauga South has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations concerning the Ontario Film Review Board. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter and the minister has up to five minutes to reply.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): On Monday, May 3, the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations inadequately answered my question concerning the Ontario Film Review Board. She defended a board that in the eyes of many Ontarians is making a farce of the film review process.

Since raising my questions, I have received a huge number of calls and letters of support from individuals as well as groups, including the Canadians Concerned Against Violence in Entertainment, the Coalition for the Safety of Our Daughters, Canadians for Decency,

Canadians Opposing Pornography, and Canadians Taking Action Against Violence. I would like to summarize the major complaints I have received regarding the OFRB.

First, the board is headed by a chair who holds the public in contempt. The chair admitted in a confidential internal memo that she lied to the public about the speed at which the board views sex videos. This chair has also refused to release information to me about the board's activities unless I use the freedom of information act, despite a statement in the annual report of the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations that "All information related to the decisions of the Ontario Film Review Board is accessible to the public."

Second, as the chair admitted, the board classifies adult sex films after viewing them at warp speed with the soundtrack turned off. As I said in my question, how can the board judge under these conditions whether a film depicts consensual sex or rape? The Criminal Code of Canada says it's a criminal offence to distribute an obscene film; that is, a film that depicts sex combined with crime, horror, cruelty or violence.

Third, the Ontario Film Review Board says its first service is a direct service to the distributor, while its second service is an indirect service to the public—this is shown both in the internal memo and in the OFRB's response to a human rights complaint about slasher films—yet the public spends \$750,000 each year for the board's operations.

Fourth, the conduct of some board members leaves much to be desired. In the internal memo, the chair chided members for not putting in a full day's work and had to remind them to pay attention when viewing the films, since they are legally responsible for the rating attached to the product.

Fifth, the board has approved for restricted viewing, and in some cases even younger audiences, AA-14 rating, slasher films which glorify violence against women. These films feature women in various states of nudity being beaten, tortured, mutilated and murdered. The board has not been exercising its authority under the Theatres Act to withhold its approval of films which contain graphic scenes of violence, torture, crime, cruelty, horror or human degradation. Indeed, the board has recently approved slasher films made several years ago that, when first reviewed, were denied approval. If this isn't a lowering of community standards, what is?

Sixth, at a meeting last week, the board considered a motion that will lower its standards for the approval of adult sex videos. Although I didn't have the stomach to read the resolution last week, I feel that I must now read it for the public to understand my concern. That recommendation stated:

"That the board allow, in adult sex videos, bondage, the insertion of foreign objects, double penetration and

ejaculation on the face, provided that they are not in a context that is verbally or physically coercive and do not cause physical harm, and provided that foreign objects are not weapons (such as guns, knives or razor blades) or other potentially injurious objects such as bottles."

Today, I telephoned the chair to ask her what the board decided regarding this recommendation from its policy committee. She refused to tell me. However, I have heard from another source that the board approved the resolution, with the exception of double penetration.

Minister, I think most Ontarians would find a film depicting these activities to be degrading and to contravene community standards. In the case of bondage, it could be very hard to judge when a situation is not violent or coercive, especially if the film is reviewed at seven or eight times the normal speed without the sound track.

Thus, if this resolution has been approved with the exception of double penetration, I believe the new guidelines could result in the OFRB's classifying films whose distribution could violate the Criminal Code.

In conclusion, given this overwhelming and disturbing list of problems concerning the OFRB, I don't see how the minister can brush aside my call for the chair's resignation and my request for a review of the Ontario Film Review Board's mandate and procedures.

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): First of all I'd like to thank the member opposite for her indulgence. Last week she had called for this late show and I was ill, and I appreciate her sympathy and her support for leaving this to this week.

I think it's important to point out once again for people the reality of the nature of what the Ontario Film Review Board is appointed to do. It's an independent citizen body responsible for the classification of commercial films and videos in Ontario. It operates under the legislation and regulations set out in the Theatres Act. The board also sets policies relating to classification decisions within the parameters set out in the Theatres Act.

Board members come from across the province. They are women and men of great diversity. They are teachers, social workers, writers and retirees, they are community volunteers, lawyers and bookkeepers, they are secretaries, performers, real estate brokers, bank tellers and fund-raisers. They are doing their best as representatives from the community at large to make decisions in very difficult situations.

To help viewers make informed decisions about the movies they watch, the board classifies films into four categories: family, parental guidance, adult accompaniment and restricted. Short information pieces or warning labels, such as "not recommended for children" etc are

included with the classification and on all advertising. I've asked the chair to look at ways of letting viewers know when films contain scenes of violence against women and more information pieces.

In terms of search and scan, as I explained to the member last week, "search and scan" is a somewhat misleading term. Panels use specialized viewing equipment which measures real time and shows the picture frame by frame at double speed. Search and scan is not synonymous with fast-forward, which speeds an image up by seven or eight times. This is the same review technique that is used by the police and it is the same review technique used by Canada Customs.

In terms of the memo, I think if you read Dorothy Christian's memo in its entirety and not just selectively, it is clear that in the memo the chair is saying and is making an effort as a manager to ensure that board members are using acceptable reviewing practices. She is reaffirming that they must do that. The chair reminds board members to exercise care and vigilance when using the search and scan feature. It is Ms Christian's responsibility to ensure that the board is managed effectively. Her memo is an expression of this responsibility.

In terms of the adult sex guidelines, I understand that the board had a discussion about recommendations from its policy committee last Thursday. I have been in touch with the chair, and she has informed me that she will be reconvening the board in June in order to have a more thorough discussion about the recommendations.

The guidelines themselves are regularly reviewed by the board. The policy committee of the board makes recommendations to the full board, which then votes to adopt, amend or reject these proposals. I understand that in June there will be a full-day discussion of the guidelines that will take place.

I want to make very clear that the board's mandate is to serve the citizens of Ontario by reviewing and classifying films and videos according to the Theatres Act and by providing information about films and videos to viewers so that they can make informed decisions about the movies they choose. While the board performs services for the film and video industry, its fundamental responsibility is to the people of Ontario.

In closing, I'd like to say to the member from Mississauga that I welcome some of her suggestions and ideas and will continue to work with her and those in the House who are interested in this issue and to work with the federal government in terms of the Criminal Code so that it'll make the job of the people at the film review board a little easier in terms of dealing specifically with the aspect of violence, particularly towards women, but violence overall. That's an area that we have to look very closely at and we do need some assistance with that. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow afternoon.

The House adjourned at 1811.



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No. 18



N° 18

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 12 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 12 mai 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

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Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

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Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Wednesday 12 May 1993

The House met at 1332.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): The Ottawa-Carleton region has adopted the following position regarding Bob Rae's social contract, and I quote:

"Municipalities and others are being told they will be part of a solution to a problem created by the provincial government. They are being told they will have to cut services in order to finance the inability of the provincial government to control its expenditures. They are being told that the broader public sector and the people they serve will have to suffer the consequences of poor fiscal management by the Rae government. They are being told that this is non-negotiable. And finally, they are being told by the very people who have mismanaged the public finances of the province how they will absorb these cuts.

"Simply, this is not acceptable.

"Ottawa-Carleton concedes that the province has a financial problem. It wants to know exactly the makeup of the projected \$17-billion deficit. It wants assurances that the province is not using savings generated from cuts on municipal cost-shared programs to fund its own initiatives.

"Ottawa-Carleton is not prepared to be told how to do it. It is not prepared to accept inferences that it has a bloated bureaucracy. It is not prepared to have its employees used as scapegoats for the province's profligate spending. It is not prepared to bow to the dictates of the Premier."

That's what Ottawa-Carleton wants to tell Bob Rae.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Over the last decade, government in Ontario appears to have become the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it wrongly and applying unsuitable remedies. That pretty well sums up the state of the Ontario Workers' Compensation Board today. It has been described as a zoo of good intentions run amok, and by all accounts, whether it's from the viewpoint of the employers, workers or government, workers' compensation is in serious trouble.

It has an \$11-billion unfunded liability that's growing at a rate of \$100 million a month. Skyrocketing premiums are delivering death blows to businesses and making Ontario less attractive for new business, investment and jobs. Meanwhile, the system is seriously failing to address the legitimate needs and aspirations of those it's supposed to help—injured workers.

Charting positive new directions on workers' compensation will not only get injured workers and employers back on track; it will get the Ontario economy back on track as well, because at the end of the day, instead of more cost, paperwork and bureaucracy, we will have businesses doing business here, more employers employing and more workers working.

Surely that's a goal worthy of all our best efforts—workers, employers and government alike—and I have no doubt that with the right direction, with the right vision and with leadership, we can and will get Ontario and the Workers' Compensation Board back to basics and back on track.

PORTUGUESE IMMIGRATION

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): I rise today to recognize an important date in the history of the Portuguese community in Canada, the 40th anniversary of Portuguese immigration to this country.

Forty years ago today, a group of Portuguese immigrants sailing on the *Saturnia* arrived in Halifax from Lisbon. Since it was late in the day, the port was closed. They therefore remained overnight in Canadian waters and stepped on to Canadian soil the following day, May 13, 1953. Thus began the first wave of Portuguese immigration to Canada.

While the first arrivals were mostly from the Portuguese mainland, by early June of 1953, immigrants from the islands of Madeira and the Azores also began arriving.

The Portuguese immigrants who came to Canada 40 years ago carried mandatory one-year work contracts as a requirement for entering Canada. Upon arrival, they went off to work on farms in the Niagara region and on the railroads. For those working on the railroads, there was the added hardship of being unable to sponsor their families back in Portugal to come to Canada. Having a fixed address was a requirement for sponsorship, and since working on the railroads involved moving around, these workers were unable to meet the criteria.

Today, there are approximately 400,000 Portuguese Canadians in the greater Toronto area alone. My riding of Fort York is home to a large and vibrant Portuguese community.

I want to acknowledge the tremendous political, social, cultural and economic contribution that the Portuguese community has made to Canadian society. It's important to remind ourselves that the foundation on which the community rests was laid by the Portuguese workers who began arriving in Canada 40 years ago today.

RYERSON POLYTECHNICAL INSTITUTE

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): On April 6,

the government announced that it would introduce legislation to establish Ryerson Polytechnic University, the first of its kind in Canada.

These new amendments to the Ryerson act recognize the continuing evolution of Ryerson. The current Ryerson mandate to provide undergraduate applied professional education will be broadened to include a recognized role in applied research and the future development of both master's and doctoral programs consistent with Ryerson's special mission.

Ryerson is a unique institution with a historic focus on applied learning which has a special importance and is critical to the future of the province. Minister Allen said the government's announcement to recognize Ryerson as a university was long overdue. I agree. Ryerson has been functioning as a university for many years. Ryerson students have paid university tuition fees and met university-level expectations. With the passage of Bill 1, the degrees they obtain and the name of the institution they attend will reflect this.

This year, Ryerson's convocation will begin on June 16. Ryerson expects to grant some 4,000 degrees, diplomas and certificates. If Bill 1 is passed quickly, these students will become the first graduating class from Ryerson Polytechnic University.

I am concerned with the government's delay in bringing this bill forward. As my party's Colleges and Universities critic, I am anxious to speak in support of Bill 1. On behalf of the students and administration of Ryerson, I encourage the government to bring Bill 1 forward so that this year's graduating class can take special pride in graduating from Ontario's first polytechnic university.

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TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): My statement's for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and it concerns his government's funding cuts that could create rural and urban chaos across Ontario.

The NDP government recently announced it was slashing about \$110 million in unconditional grants to municipalities, and municipalities will also feel the effects of the \$285-million cut to public sector payrolls in a bid to save another \$2 billion.

The NDP government is terrorizing municipalities and alarming taxpayers by unilaterally enforcing the \$110 million worth of cuts to unconditional grants without outlining exactly how these cuts will be divided among the 839 municipalities in Ontario.

The cuts to unconditional grants will spin off into reductions in day care spaces, fewer housing spaces, many cuts with regard to families and will force some daily hostel users on to the streets. The provincial cuts could also cause major service interruptions for firefighters, police, ambulance services and garbage collection.

Minister, instead of accusing Ontario's 839 municipalities of fearmongering, you and your government should show some backbone by trimming jobs from and rolling back salaries in the bloated civil service, fire the baby cabinet ministers who don't do anything but cost taxpayers \$400,000 each, and make a serious attempt at cutting government waste.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): The Law Enforcement Torch Run is an international event held to benefit Special Olympics. The torch run has become the largest grassroots fund-raising event for the Special Olympics, involving over 75,000 law enforcement personnel worldwide.

The 1993 Law Enforcement Torch Run will continue to carry the torch, which represents the "Flame of Hope" and the values of the Special Olympics: skill, sharing, courage and joy. From May 29 to June 13, at the direction of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the seventh annual torch run will see law enforcement runners take up the torch as part of the cross-province relay which begins in every corner of Ontario and continues through each day until its conclusion in Barrie. Over 8,000 kilometres will be covered by 7,000 law enforcement personnel from over 120 police and law enforcement agencies.

Personnel from your local law enforcement agency will be collecting donations on behalf of Ontario's Special Olympics. They're hoping to build on their 1992 total of \$525,000.

A special northern final leg run will be held in conjunction with the Ontario Special Olympics Summer Games opening ceremony August 26, 1992, in Sudbury, Ontario.

All donations go to the Ontario Special Olympics for the expansion of its programs throughout the province. All costs for the torch run are contributed by law enforcement participants and their corporate sponsors.

I'd like to take an opportunity to thank OPP Constable Gerry O'Dowd of the Queen's Park detachment for keeping this event large and in place in this Legislature.

CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): This year, 1993, marks the 75th anniversary of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. Later this afternoon, we will be celebrating that anniversary at a reception here at Queen's Park.

I would like to relate some of the history of the CNIB, because it is really a story of one man's vision and how that vision has changed the lives of the visually impaired in Canada.

Edwin Albert Baker, who was born in Ontario, was blinded while fighting in the trenches at Flanders during the First World War. Upon his return to Canada after a

lengthy convalescence, he discovered that rehabilitation services for the blind and visually impaired were virtually non-existent. In 1918, he and six others founded the CNIB, and he served as managing director from 1920 until his retirement in 1962. Lieutenant Colonel Baker was a visionary whose leadership kept the CNIB on the leading edge of rehabilitation services for the blind, visually impaired and deaf-blind.

I am pleased that members of the Halton-Peel CNIB branch are here in the House today, seated in the members' gallery. All 10 who are here today are workers and volunteers for the CNIB and three of them are clients as well. They represent what Edwin Baker strived for. He wanted the visually impaired to be proud, self-sufficient and contributing members of society.

The services the CNIB provides have given thousands, and continues on the leading edge, an enduring legacy to a great Canadian. I extend my congratulations, and on a personal note would tell you that my own mother lost her sight through glaucoma and through a malpractice incident with an ophthalmologist, and she too has benefited greatly from the services at the CNIB. I congratulate them on being here today and celebrating their anniversary.

VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): Recently, the Owen Sound Police Services hosted a volunteer community recognition evening which honoured citizens in our area who have assisted the police in various ways. The force was trying to show the city how much they appreciate the work being done by the legion of volunteers who give their time, their money and their expertise to help.

They applauded those who worked with the Community Watch groups, victim assistance programs, family violence coalitions and Students against Drunk Driving. They wanted to thank those who served on Crime Stoppers, the bicycle safety and crime prevention committees and the alcohol and drug advisory group.

I am proud that the Owen Sound Police Services understands and is encouraging contributions from the public. I believe it is very important, especially now that the government funding is being cut, that the police are opening their doors and using the enthusiasm, the energy and the talents of the community to achieve their common goals.

In addition to the 80 local recipients who received awards, they also gave one to me, as the provincial representative of the government in the riding. It reads, "To the Ministry of the Attorney General for outstanding contributions to crime prevention," and I would be delighted to give it to the minister with the appreciation of the Owen Sound police.

PRESERVE ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOODS SOCIETY

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): I'd like

to bring the attention of the House to the existence of a wonderful group of individuals, whom I know quite well, working in my riding, who perform some very grass-roots tasks.

PENS is the acronym under which they work; it's the Preserve Established Neighbourhoods Society. It is a group of St Catharines residents who have come together, more by accident than design, to work to ensure that new development is well planned and subject to public comment. With strength in numbers, PENS provides advice and support to residents who are concerned about particular developments in the city of St Catharines. Since being formed last year, PENS has proved it is a force to be reckoned with.

Quite recently, on my cable program, I had a chance to bring to the attention of the citizens of St Catharines the resource kit they have put together, and they have converted their knowledge and experience for the benefit of all. I recommend highly the work they have undertaken and that all have the opportunity to look at the wonderful work PENS has done for one and all.

UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): On April 29th, I made an unparliamentary comment toward the Leader of the Opposition. I withdraw that.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I thank the honourable member.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I would like all members to welcome to our chamber this afternoon, seated in the members' gallery west, a former member of this assembly representing Brantford, Mr David Neuman. Welcome.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTION FINANCES

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the 18th annual report of the Commission on Election Finances, which covers the year 1992.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I would also like to invite all members to welcome to our assembly this afternoon, seated in the Speaker's gallery, members of the regional parliament of Basilicata, Italy: Dr Francesco Mutidieri, Mr Gigi Acito, Professor Nicola Filazzola. Please join me in welcoming them to our country and to our assembly.

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ORAL QUESTIONS

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My first question is for the Premier. Yesterday I had an opportunity to meet with more than 100 young people and people who work with youth in this province. I know that the Premier spoke to the same group of

people and I'm sure that he was as aware as I was of the tremendous concerns these people have for the future of youth in this province. Clearly, these individuals wanted to hear from the Premier what his government's plans would be for young people and for youth employment. These people were trying to get a sense, a measurement, of this government's commitment to young people, but the Premier refused to answer any questions.

My question to the Premier today is: How would you have answered their questions? Premier, what hope do you have to offer the 150,000 young people in this province who are without jobs?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I would have answered, and did, in fact, in talking to people, state very clearly the fact that the government of Ontario—perhaps the leader of the Liberal Party chose to conduct herself differently, I don't know; I chose not to give a kind of super-partisan speech, in which I talked about the fact, for example, that the government is now committed to spending \$180 million on youth employment programs throughout the year, which is the highest dollar amount that's ever been allocated in the history of the province; that last year's program was a significant breakthrough in terms of new initiatives for the people of the province, and that this year's program will not only match that but increase the allocations for summer employment; and the fact that the government has moved ahead on issues that are of concern to young people, like the minimum wage, that we've moved ahead with OSAP reform, that we've moved ahead with a series of programs which are making a difference to young people.

The fact of the matter is that given the very difficult economic situation it's in, this government is investing more in jobs, is investing more in our services for young people and investing more in training, investing more in apprenticeship and investing more in opportunity than any government in the history of the province. I encourage the young people to stay involved, to stay active—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the Premier complete his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —to continue to participate and to continue to press for the kinds of reforms that will make a difference to people.

Mrs McLeod: I'm not sure how true that answer will ring for any of the young people who just heard it, particularly when the Premier starts to talk about commitments to post-secondary and opportunities there, with fewer spaces in colleges and universities, with higher tuition fees, with less money in the student assistance program and no grants at all for student assistance. That answer is not going to ring very true with the young people of this province who are looking for opportunities for education.

Beyond that, we, like those young people yesterday, are trying to get answers to some very specific questions about the issues that affect youth. Last week in this House we raised questions about summer employment opportunities for young people, and while the Premier talks about one program under the Jobs Ontario Youth that is creating summer jobs, he will know that there is another set of summer job opportunities offered by the government through the ministries each summer to students.

Last week we raised our concern that the number of positions offered to young people through the ministries would be reduced because there had been expenditure cutbacks. The minister denied that that was in fact the case. It was obvious that the government then realized it had to cover its tracks, because we understand that instructions were immediately afterwards sent to the ministries telling them that they had to hire the same number of students even though indeed there would be \$1 million less to pay for the programs. Premier, there's only one way to hire the same number of students with less dollars, and that is to shorten the length of the work experience.

Will you confirm that although the government is going to hire the same number of students in the summer Experience program, they will have fewer hours of work?

Hon Mr Rae: I think the answer overall is that you've got to look overall at the structure of the programs that are in place. I can say to the honourable member, the information that she gave to the House last week was information which was not particularly accurate in terms of the plans that had been made. As to her allegation today that somehow we were covering our tracks in response to her question, I suggest to her that she's suffering from a bad case of exaggerated self-reference.

The government's plans were in place. They were discussed explicitly at cabinet sessions when we looked at the expenditure reduction programs, and the commitment that the government made very clearly was that overall the programs would be maintained, that the funding for those programs overall would be increased, and that we would ensure that at least the same number of students was hired and that if possible, in terms of summer programs, an additional number of students would be hired.

So all those facts are out there, all those programs are in place, and in fact the commitment to youth employment by this government is greater than at any time in the history of the province and is substantially greater than when the honourable member opposite was a member of the Peterson government. We're doing far more than the Peterson government ever did, and I don't recall your voice being—

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —raised in concern or in opposition to the activities of that government at the time.

Mrs McLeod: At some point the Premier might want to turn his attention to certain discrepancies between the information that is provided to us through our inquiries to the ministries and the information which is provided to us in the House through the ministers, so that he can determine just what the facts of the situation are, and we will all be wiser as a result.

I say to the Premier that we will continue to raise questions that give us concern about how effectively the dollars that are currently being spent on training programs are being used, that we believe that many of the dollars that are currently being spent on training programs through the Jobs Ontario Training program could be more effectively used for training people who really need the training.

We have concentrated in the last week on summer jobs because that is such a current issue, and because we believe that summer jobs offer students dollars they need to be able to stay in school, as well as job experience and training that they need to get jobs in the future.

I did make what the Premier might call a partisan speech yesterday, because the Premier keeps saying, "Show us some alternatives." So yesterday we released six proposals that we believe would give young people in this province some hope, some encouragement, at what is a tremendously difficult time, that we wanted to respond to the fact that 18% of our young people are unemployed.

One of those proposals is that some \$14 million currently in the Jobs Ontario Training program be redirected to create additional summer employment opportunities for young people. This would support 8,000 more young people in summer jobs.

So I ask you, Premier, as you keep asking us for constructive, positive proposals, will you commit to redirecting \$14 million of your Jobs Ontario Training program to create more summer employment opportunities for our young people?

Hon Mr Rae: I'm happy to look at any suggestions that come out of the Leader of the Opposition and more than pleased to look at her suggestions. If her suggestion is that we spend an additional \$14 million on youth employment, which would take us above the \$180-million amount, which is the largest amount ever, then I say to her that we will look at any reasonable proposal that's made.

I think the member ought to also recognize that the money that's allocated under the Jobs Ontario Training program is money that's being taken up at a rate that is far quicker than anyone had anticipated, many of whom are young people who might otherwise qualify for the kind of training programs which she is describing. The

Jobs Ontario Training programs are not by any means limited to people who are over the age of 24. Those funds are available for people at all ages and certainly over the age of 18.

I say to the honourable member, we'll obviously look at the plans which she's put forward. However, all the Liberal rhetoric in the world cannot obscure the fact that this government is investing more in training and investing more in youth employment than any government in the history of the province, and substantially more than was the case under the Peterson government.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. New question.

GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): All the rhetoric in the world from the government benches may not provide us with the answer to my next question. My next question will be directed towards the Minister Without Portfolio but, we understand, some responsibilities for Finance.

The people of Brantford have been absolutely devastated by the government's announcement that the long-awaited relocation of jobs to their community has now been cancelled. The government will be well aware of the chronology here.

In November 1990, the government confirmed its plans to proceed with the Brantford relocation. On April 24, 1992, another review of the relocation program, and the government announced yet again that it would be proceeding with the planned relocation to Brantford. February 12, 1993, the government once again reaffirmed support for the project and promised to begin construction as soon as possible. March 25, 1993, the province paid a reported \$1.3 million to acquire land in Brantford for the relocation. April 23, 1993, the government reversed itself and abruptly killed the project.

1400

The mayor of Brantford is here today along with residents from Brantford. They want some answers from the government. There is one question they want answered: Minister, will you tell the people of Brantford why your government has broken its promise to them?

Hon Brad Ward (Minister without Portfolio in Finance): I thank the member opposite for that question. I'm willing to meet with the good folks of Brantford at any time, but based on her question, I think the most appropriate individual to answer it would be the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and I'm going to refer that question to her.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): On a very brief point of order, Mr Speaker: The question would normally be directed to the Treasurer of the province. This is the junior minister present today. The Treasurer is not here. Surely it's incumbent upon the junior minister to answer that question. That's why they're paid.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The minister to whom the question was directed chose to redirect the question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and there's certainly nothing out of order about that.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: The junior minister proceeded to answer the question, said he was prepared to meet with the good people of Brantford at any time and entered into a discussion that appeared to be leading towards some sort of an answer. Then, after giving a little speech to the people from Brantford, he refers the question. I think if he's going to refer the question, he should simply stand in his place and refer it and not make a speech beforehand.

The Speaker: To the member for Mississauga West, indeed he raises a valid point. It is common practice in this chamber that if a minister is asked a question and the minister wishes to refer the question, the minister simply indicates that rather than providing a part of an answer. So in the future it would be helpful if the minister would simply refer it if that's the intention of the minister.

Hon Frances Lankin (Minister of Economic Development and Trade): May I indicate to the members who have raised concern that had the question gone to the Treasurer, he would have referred this question to me because, as Minister of Economic Development and Trade, I have been given responsibility for the \$100-million capital fund with which we'll be working to help those communities which have received the bad news about the cancellation of the government relocation programs.

The residents of Brantford who are here who were spoken to by a number of MPs, including the member for Brantford, raised a number of issues which I think are very important and valid ones. There is no doubt that we understand the depth of concern and disappointment of the people in Brantford with the result of the cancellation and relocation. But as I have said to the Leader of the Opposition before with respect to the expenditure control plan and the decisions around it, in spite of some of the investments that have been made around significant savings and operating costs and on capital costs, it was an important part of the package.

We also, out of the money that would be saved, have allocated \$100 million from which I will be working with the MPPs and the mayors and the communities involved to try and bring about development activities to replace those jobs that have been lost. In further supplementaries, I would be pleased to give the Leader of the Opposition more information.

Mrs McLeod: Had this relocation project been going ahead, it would have been absolutely appropriate for a minister responsible for economic development to be responding to this question. Cancelling this move

had everything to do with losing opportunities for economic development; it had everything to do with shortsighted, last-minute expenditure cut decisions.

When I asked one of the ministers supposedly responsible what the total cost savings would be, I was not even able to get an answer to that question. If it was such a bad decision from an economic perspective, if it was such a poorly thought-out decision in terms of the long-term impact, why then, after a full-year review, did this government decide in February to go ahead with the project? Why did they go ahead and purchase land?

Why was it, Minister, that just days before the project was cancelled, just days, when they asked about the status of the relocation program, the Chairman of the Management Board was quoted as saying, "It's also true that the unions have said it's one of the issues they will bring to the table, and when you are negotiating, things get traded." Given this statement, Minister, will you admit today that your government has traded away Brantford's hope for the future?

Hon Ms Lankin: Let me begin by saying absolutely not.

I would like to respond to the first part of the honourable member's question with respect to if this was such a bad economic plan or so poorly thought-out. We don't say that it was a bad economic plan. It was a pre-election plan by the previous government but it wasn't a bad economic plan, and it was one which we decided, after a great deal of review, to continue to support.

In light of the fiscal situation that the government faces, in light of the attempt to bring down expenditures, we have to really question whether or not we get good value by spending money to relocate an existing job, as opposed to using some of that same money to try to attract and create new jobs. We've decided to use the money in a way now that we think is wiser and in a way that saves us some money against the overall fiscal projection for the cost of relocation.

The decision was taken by cabinet as part of the \$4-billion expenditure reduction program. It is not something that was part of negotiations. It was decided prior to the social contract negotiations being commenced and before the union proposals. So I have to say to the member she's absolutely wrong in her assertions.

The Speaker: Final supplementary. The member for Brant-Haldimand.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): Prior to the cancellation of its relocation, a billboard had been up by the citizens of Brantford, thanking the Premier for making the right call in supporting the relocation. These people are now wondering who made this call.

They feel betrayed by this government which, despite having thrown total support behind the project a few months ago, is now saying that it does not make sense in tough economic times to take one job from Toronto

and locate it in Brantford. However, this reasoning is not being followed by the government consistently, because other relocations will be allowed to go ahead. When Brantford residents demanded to know why the promised move would not be taking place, the clear message given to them by their provincial representative, Mr Ward, and to quote, was, "Stop dwelling in the past."

Brantford citizens desperately need the jobs and the economic spinoff that would result from the government relocation. We have heard from many residents—

The Speaker: And your question?

Mr Eddy: —that the relocation would have helped Brantford towards recovery. Will the minister give this community and its people some hope for economic recovery and commit today to taking another look at the Brantford relocation project?

Hon Ms Lankin: I think the one thing I would agree with the member on, and I know the MPP for Brantford also agrees with the member, is the devastation that community has felt in terms of the loss of its manufacturing sector, the devastation that is felt largely as a result of the effects of free trade and the GST, the high dollar, the high interest rate. It has had a very severe effect on that community.

If I reflect on the comments of some of the speakers at the demonstration today from the community of Brantford—a youth who spoke about bringing back hope to that community, a mayor who spoke about bringing back jobs—I think those are things we can commit to. I think that the \$100 million we've established to work with those affected communities allows us to sit down with the MPP, with the mayor and the council and economic development committees, and attempt to bring those same number of jobs, through attraction of private sector investment, to those communities.

If I could just touch on the comments of the mayor, I want you to know and I want the members of the Legislature to know that he indicated support for deficit reduction. He understood that. He indicated he wanted open communications and he wanted to work in partnership with us. That community wants jobs. We're going to work with them to try to deliver that.

1410

LABOUR RELATIONS

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier. Premier, your social contract discussions and talks started out as a plan to contain the provincial deficit by cutting the public sector payroll by 5%. That was the *raison d'être* to bring the unions in to discuss the payroll costs.

Both you, Premier, and the Minister of Finance and, yesterday, the deputy Deputy Premier for the day have said that taxes are not on the social contract negotiating

table, that the talks are to discuss how to find this 5% cut in talks.

But, Premier, it now appears, because the unions have talked everything but their own payroll—they've talked taxes, they've talked spending cuts, they've talked everybody else but themselves—that next week's budget will contain many of these ideologically driven taxes that the union leaders are calling for. It won't matter to the unions how or why they're in the budget; they've insisted that they be in the budget or they're not going to talk to you.

I would ask you this, Premier: Why are you allowing the union leaders to set the agenda for these talks that started out as the wage concession talks? Why are you allowing them to set the agenda, including even the tax increases, what type and how much they should be in your budget? Is this the real cost now of these social contract talks, that the unions will set our budget for us?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): No. The premise of the question is bogus. I would say that the leader of the third party has got it all wrong in terms of the way these things have been determined and how we've worked it through.

As a government, we've had a number of discussions over the months, obviously, in preparation for a budget and in preparation for dealing with the economic and fiscal problems facing the province. We've never made any secret—in fact we've been stating for some time—that we regarded the revenue situation and the overall financial situation in the province as sufficiently serious—the long-term impact, the cumulative impact of federal underfunding, for example, this year affecting us to the tune of some \$4.5 billion—that there really is a need for us to deal with the tax question.

So this government long ago—we're the ones who put taxes in front of the people of the province. We stated very clearly that tax increases were going to be a feature of the budget. So I would say to the member that that's had nothing to do with the social contract discussions whatsoever, nothing whatsoever to do with the social contract discussions.

The fact that the unions have independently decided to put forward some proposals on taxes, so have a number of other groups—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —so have all kinds of groups and advocacy groups out there in our society; so has the business community, from a very different perspective. I don't think any of us should be surprised that there are a number of views on the table with respect to taxation. All I'm saying to you, Mr Speaker, is that the issue of taxation is not being discussed at the social contract negotiation and that the issue of taxation will be addressed in the budget.

The Speaker: Will the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: We've never made any secret of this. So for you to stand up today and make the kind of allegation that you make is just the worst kind of political rhetoric from the third party.

Mr Harris: No, they don't need to be discussed any more at the table; they've been picked up and dropped right into the budget. This is what I am saying is really not fair and not right. These are taxes that will result in loss of investment. These are taxes that will result in loss of jobs. These are taxes that will result in a down-sizing of our private sector.

Premier, my point is this: Union leaders shouldn't be bargaining tax hikes. They shouldn't be bargaining and deciding what services the public should get. That's for the public to decide. They shouldn't be bargaining how hospitals will operate, municipalities or school boards. What they should be bargaining is their payroll costs, and you told them that was the agenda.

Let's deal with these payroll costs and let's put in a perspective what it is you asked them to do. Over the last two years the costs for your own employees in the government of Ontario increased by 19.5%, more than triple the rate of inflation. You said your goal was to reduce those total payroll costs by 5%, leaving a net increase over the three years that you've been in government for the public sector payroll costs in the province of Ontario of 14%, still 6% in excess of inflation.

Now, to date, you've made no progress on how to achieve that. I don't think this is an impossible goal; I thought it was very realistic. And to date, the unions have said: "Hike taxes. Do this. Cut that. We don't want to talk about that."

The Speaker: And the member's question?

Mr Harris: My question is simply this: How have the negotiations been going on cutting back the 19.5% cost of the Ontario government payroll to 15% or 14.5%, as you told us the goal was? How are those talks going?

Hon Mr Rae: I appreciate the question. Our sense is that for the first time today we're going to have people around the same table, which is I think something which needs to happen, and that we're going to have a serious discussion.

But I say with respect to the really antediluvian position of the leader of the third party—he says: "Don't ask workers to talk about working conditions. Don't ask workers their ideas on how to improve services. Don't ask workers how to deal with the question of restructuring the public service." That kind of 19th-century attitude towards improving the morale in the public service is exactly the opposite of the direction in which we should be going.

We need to be talking with people, encouraging participation and taking advantage of the best ideas we can come up with. We think the workers themselves can come up with a lot of good ideas on how to preserve services, on how to improve services in the province of Ontario, and I'm proud of the fact that instead of simply telling employees what to do, we're sitting down and negotiating with them in a positive spirit. I'm proud of that, and I think it's a better approach than the Tory approach.

Mr Harris: It wasn't me who said, "Unions, we want to talk to you about how to cut your payroll 5%." It was you. These were your discussions. This is what you said the goal was. This was the reason to bring them together. I understand there are other forums to discuss programs, but you said you wanted to call them in and discuss cutting the payroll back by 5%. And now all we've gotten out of this so far is that you're going to hike taxes in the upcoming budget so you can appease your union friends. This way of meeting your deficit target, Premier, is going to kill jobs; it's going to kill investment; it's going to downsize the private sector that we so desperately need to increase; it'll halt economic recovery in this province.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business today wrote to the Treasurer suggesting more than \$2 billion worth of cuts you can make instead of hiking taxes or further downsizing the private sector. The CFIB is made up of job creators; it's made up of investors. Why is it that you're telling them that you're going to hike taxes to destroy any opportunity they have to create jobs, moving exactly in the opposite direction to the way you should be going?

At the same time, you've not had one minute of any meaningful negotiations on the original goal, which was, how do we roll back a 19.5% increase over three years to bring it back to only a 14.5% increase? How do we explain that not one word of the talks has been on the original purpose, which you said was to cut 5%?

Hon Mr Rae: Sometimes it's hard to know exactly where to cut in, but I'd just say to the honourable member that if you look at the document of April 23, if you want to go back to that, if you look at the document that we put out, if you want to address that question and not address it in a rhetorical way, we talked about the benefits of a social contract intended to preserve jobs and services, intended to empower workers and allow for new work organization, intended to broaden the base of participation, to modernize the negotiating process and keep the public sector affordable.

All those are the factors that are involved in the discussions which we've been encouraging people to participate in. It's been difficult, but I come back to my point: first of all, that the whole purpose of what we're doing is to create jobs; it's in order to keep the recovery

going and to keep it alive and to extend it. That's the purpose of what we're doing in terms of the approach we're taking to the economy, and the approach with our own employees is designed to get everyone to see that there are real tradeoffs and advantages to looking to longer-term interests as we look not to the last 3 years or the last 5 years or the last 10 years but we look out for 3 years and see that if we can get to some understanding of the tradeoffs, we'll make the public sector more affordable, we'll make it more efficient and we'll also do more than any other alternative to protecting jobs and to protecting services. That's the basis of the philosophy and the approach that we set out in the social contract, which the member seems to have missed.

The Speaker: New question.

Mr Harris: The Premier said he wanted to cut 5%, and now you don't want to talk about that. It's no wonder the people of Brantford don't believe you or trust you, the way you treat them. It's no wonder the taxpayers don't believe or trust you.

The Speaker: To whom is your second question directed?

1420

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My second question also is to the Premier. Earlier today I met with the Committee of Local Area Councils, COMLAC, and they have a simple message for you: Stop meddling in their affairs.

Premier, you have a \$17-billion problem created through your own mismanagement. The municipalities know you need help with this problem, and they are willing to help you with your deficit problem. I don't know why they are, the way you've treated them, but they are willing to help. But they believe they know how to best manage their own affairs. We all know you have enough trouble managing your affairs. They believe for the last couple of years they've done a better job running their municipalities than you have the province.

Why do you not just tell municipalities how much you need them to help contribute to your deficit problem and then let them deal with it, let them tell you how it is they can help you, instead of you telling them how it is they're supposed to help you? That's the simple message they asked me to deliver to you today.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I appreciate the point, but again, I know the member would like to try to personalize this issue and say that somehow this government or this Premier has a "\$17-billion problem." But I would say to the honourable member very directly that if this is the level of the attitude which the member is out there taking with respect to the deficit problem—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Rae: The provincial economy has a deficit problem; the province of Ontario has one and what we are doing is saying to the municipalities and saying to all the transfer partners that are out there—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the Premier take his seat, please.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: The point that's being made and the one that we're having to share with our transfer partners is that the burden has to be shared. It's the only way we can get out of this. The only thing we can get out of this—

Mr Harris: They're offering to share it.

Hon Mr Rae: Now you're saying on their behalf that they're willing to share it. I would say to you that's my sense as well.

All we're saying is that then means that we have to together make sure that the impacts of the decisions with respect to the transfers are fully discussed and that we're all aware of what the potential impacts might be and that we're sharing as much information as possible and that we're seeing if there are ways in which the impacts might be less severe than if we all worked in splendid isolation. I don't think we should be working in isolation from one another; I think we have to work through together and get through this problem together. That's the kind of commitment that we're seeking and that's the kind of approach that we're taking. I think it's a wiser approach than to pretend that the deficit is somebody else's problem or somebody else's fault.

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: The deficit is a responsibility that now belongs to all of us. We can argue till the cows come home about where it came from.

Mr Harris: I just got through saying the municipalities said it's a \$17-billion problem. They acknowledge that it was your mismanagement that got us into it, but they also said this: "We're willing to help out." They're telling you they will help out. COMLAC is not alone in thinking that this government should get its own house in order before it tells others how to run their shops.

This morning the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario presented you with a plan that would save \$100 million annually. They identified more than \$25 million in duplication. The plan would deliver more effective and efficient environmental protection, on top of the hundreds of millions of dollars it would save. Quite frankly, it's similar to the announcement I made in the last campaign saying that conservation

authorities were already dealing with water quantity; why not have them deal with the water quality as well? I'm happy they picked up on it.

Aside from that, what they are saying to you is, you, Premier, are telling them how they should cut back. They think they're a lot better at how they can be more efficient than you are, and their track record—like municipalities, like hospitals, like school boards—is a lot better than yours. I would ask you this then, so that they can help, as they want to, with the deficit reduction plan: Will you agree to their proposal instead of what you're telling them to do?

Hon Mr Rae: First of all, we're not telling them what to do.

Mr Harris: You are.

Hon Mr Rae: No, we're not. The member puts that forward as a statement of fact. It's quite false.

What I would say to the honourable member is that there are reasonable proposals coming from the conservation authorities. Obviously, we will look at those proposals.

We're interested at looking at proposals and ideas that come forward from other groups in terms of the challenge facing the province. But I would just suggest to the honourable member that to try to sort of trivialize this thing and say that somehow it's all the responsibility of one level of government or another, I think the people of the province have had enough of that approach. I think the people of the province, when they hear certain mayors simply pointing the finger at one level of government or another, that's not a realistic approach. We have a problem together.

If they don't have a problem, it's because the province has been subsidizing and passing on transfer payments for many years. We're now saying we have to share these problems in a more realistic way. That's exactly what we're doing, and I think it's the right approach. And if I may say so, I think it's a more mature approach than the one that's being advocated by the member of the third party.

Mr Harris: I think the mature approach is them saying, "We're ready to help you." That is a mature approach. They're also saying, "Look at the record over the last two and a half years and see who managed affairs better: municipalities, conservation authorities or Bob Rae and the NDP government."

You may not think it's happening, but what's happening is you're telling them how they can help you. They're offering their services. They're saying, "We'll help with your deficit problem, but let us do it."

You know, Premier, just because you've been the last person in Ontario to realize the deficit's a problem, just because your party and your government are the last ones to say we have to cut back—municipalities, others have been downsizing for the last three years. Many

have had salary freezes for the last three years. They should be telling you how to do it and you should be listening, not the other way around.

The Speaker: And the supplementary?

Mr Harris: So my final supplementary to you is simply that. Instead of Michael Decter telling municipalities, hospitals, school boards and conservation authorities how they can help you, will you allow them to tell you how they can help you? It's a pretty simple, straightforward question.

Hon Mr Rae: Let me say that we're very interested in the kinds of proposals that are coming forward, and frankly we're very glad that what we've started is a process by which people are participating. But if you want to just contrast for a moment the tone struck by the Ontario Hospital Association in its statement yesterday and the kind of rhetoric which we've heard from the leader of the third party, what does the hospital association say, a group which is being affected very much? We're not denying it for a moment.

They say they're encouraged that the government is coming to grips with the current realities of the province and what they refer to as a "crisis in costs" faced by the broader public sector. The tone of their submission is extremely positive. In their submission they say that in their view "the government's proposals for deficit reduction, including the social contract, are a reasonable starting point for negotiations."

That's what we're hearing from a group responsible for the expenditure of billions of dollars in the province. They say what we're doing is a reasonable approach, a reasonable starting point for negotiations. That's the approach which is being taken by a former colleague of the leader of the third party, a former cabinet colleague, with whom he sat in cabinet for some several months and with whom he sat in caucus for several years and who was himself a leadership candidate for the premiership of the province.

I would much prefer to deal with that kind of responsible approach taken by somebody with the responsibility of Dennis Timbrell than take the kind of irresponsible action that's being followed by the leader of the third party. I'll prefer to deal with Mr Timbrell on these issues.

1430

GAMBLING

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): My question is for the minister of casinos, otherwise known as the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. It's interesting the Premier talks about responsible approaches.

Minister, I want to segue on that theme of responsible approach and ask you to explain how you can, with any sense of professionalism, respond to a request for proposal for an interim casino in Windsor that appeared

only once, on March 26 in the Windsor Star, and required, nine days later, an interim proposal to be submitted; nine days for a proposal appearing once in the local newspaper. Let's talk about responsibility and integrity and fairness in the process. Try and explain that, Minister.

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): The project team from my ministry has been working of course very closely with the city of Windsor—I hope the member will listen closely, because I seem to be getting laryngitis and I don't have a loud voice today—has been working with the project team and the municipal council, and this is a decision that they came to together in terms of getting the RFP going and getting the ball rolling in terms of getting the interim casino up and running. I believe—I can check further—that the date was chosen alongside working with the municipal council.

Mr McClelland: Minister, at the end of the day, you cannot share responsibility for your jurisdiction, for the decisions that you are making, with the municipal council. You are the leader in this project, Minister. It is your responsibility.

Let's think this through very carefully for a moment. There are 24 proponents out there. Some of them will be coming to you in the near future with \$300,000. To think for one moment that the system can't be skewed unfairly by having an interim operation up and running, unfairly to their advantage—bear in mind what I told you earlier. You allowed one ad to run one day in a local paper and gave nine business days for a return. If it wasn't sad, it would be funny. You go on to say, "If the building isn't built, you can build it by July 1." That's how absurd your advertisement is. Be that as it may, it's indicative of the fact, Minister, you're totally without any direction in this.

You received a letter yesterday from the Canada Square group and Ramada Inn group, which are interested in building the permanent facility. They want to put their money on the table and have a fair, honest shot. They say to you, "In the interests of integrity and fairness"—words that used to be high priorities in the NDP lexicon—"will you open up the tendering process?"

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr McClelland: Minister, you have not explained nor accepted the responsibility for a decision you made. You are obliged to do so. If you think the dice might not be loaded in somebody's favour by limiting it the way you have, you are naïve, Minister. Do it and do it with integrity and do it fairly and do it the way it should be done.

Hon Ms Churley: This whole process has been handled with the utmost integrity. The request for

proposal has been handled with the utmost integrity and is completely aboveboard. In fact, the project team in my ministry has received compliments from around the world in terms of how the project team has been handling the whole proposal, and I would be happy to share that with the member later today.

TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): My question is for the Premier and it concerns the devastation of Ontario's tourism industry and the indefinite layoffs of over 60,000 employees in the tourism and hospitality sector under the watch of this supposed labour NDP government.

In a recent pre-budget news release, the chairman of Tourism Ontario, Bruce Stanton, made the following statement: "Our industry offers better consumer value and a broader range of experiences than ever before, but we can't compete with ever-escalating taxes."

My question to the Premier is this: What advice is he giving to the Minister of Finance to encourage him to provide tax relief to Ontario's tourism sector?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I'd like to refer that question to the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation.

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I'm fully aware, of course, having met with Mr Stanton and Tourism Ontario and having read the very thoughtful brief that they've submitted to our government with regard to the concerns of their industry, of the difficulties that they face. I am, and our government is, certainly very interested in making sure that we help to support that industry as much as possible.

We're certainly meeting with them. Actually, I'm just now putting together the minister's advisory committee to deal with our long-term strategy on a tourism sectoral policy, and of course tax policies as with many other factors are issues that we'll be looking very seriously at.

Mr Arnott: I must say I'm very disappointed with the Premier's lack of interest and, to the minister, Tourism Ontario has been presenting thoughtful briefs for the last three years on taxes. Right now you're collecting a meal tax, a room tax, provincial sales tax, commercial concentration tax and high liquor tariffs. You've closed the trade offices abroad without making prior arrangements with the government of Canada embassies to sell Ontario as a tourism destination. There's been no follow-up by the Premier to his January meeting with tourism representatives. There's been no sectoral strategy announcement which you committed to earlier this month. There are no new ideas in your marketing program.

When will the government start to recognize the vast untapped potential of tourism as an economic engine for growth in Ontario?

Hon Ms Swarbrick: Actually, if the member has been speaking with the tourism sector, then he would know full well that in fact our Premier has taken great efforts and seriousness in dealing with this industry. He met personally with the representatives from Tourism Ontario recently and, of course, has discussed those aspects with me that they raised with him. He's met personally with a number of key business people in both the tourism and cultural aspects.

I think the fact that he moved to put together the two ministries of Culture and Tourism in the last shuffle shows very much the seriousness that he gives to this area. The fact that there's tremendous potential to be gained in the synergy between culture and tourism is certainly the kind of thing that I keep hearing from both of those sectors when I meet with them. I think this government is showing tremendous openness to new ideas on how we can market things all the better in terms of the assets this province offers.

In terms of the area of marketing, because of that synergy that is resulting from the Premier's move of bringing culture and tourism together, my staff are in fact developing now an action plan that we'll soon be able to release, including the ability to market this province as a tourism destination, that it has every right to be as the number one feature of this country.

ACCESS TO CHILDREN IN CUSTODY

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): My question is to the Attorney General. I have received numerous phone calls and letters from single parents, all complaining that the police are not enforcing custody orders. Through talking to these non-custodial parents, I have learned that they show up on time to collect their children for their weekly visit, only to be told by their ex-spouse that they can't have access to the children. When these people call the police to complain, more often than not nothing is done to make sure that the custody order is obeyed. I've even heard stories of parents, custody order in hand, being arrested by the police at the request of the ex-spouse.

According to section 282 of the Criminal Code of Canada, it is an indictable offence to harbour a person under the age of 14 with intent to deprive the parent or guardian or any other person who has the lawful care or charge of that person, and with an intent to do so in contravention of a valid and existing court order.

Does a custody order not grant the non-custodial parent lawful care or charge of their children for a set period of time? My interpretation of section 282 of the Criminal Code of Canada—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Hansen: —is that parents who ignore custody orders or parents who deprive their ex-spouses of the lawful charge of their children are breaking the law.

Can the Attorney General advise this House and my constituency if anything's being done to ensure custody orders are enforced to the full extent of the law?

Hon Marion Boyd (Attorney General): I know that the member is very deeply concerned about the issue of access and I think many members of the House are as well, so I really welcome the question.

In response to his question as to whether section 282 of the Criminal Code is the appropriate way to deal with this, I should advise him that the ministry sees 282 as being concerned with and premised on situations where a child has been abducted, and the provision does not apply to a simple refusal to allow access contrary to the access provisions of a custody order. It really must be noted that section 282 refers to a contravention of custody orders, not access provisions, which are the situations that you're most concerned with.

Sections 36 and 38 of the Children's Law Reform Act are the appropriate ones. The court has the power to act where a parent breaches those provisions. Indeed, the courts have held parents in contempt of court. Parents have sometimes been jailed or imposed with fines for that contempt of court and that is the appropriate way to deal with these issues.

1440

Mr Hansen: Can the Attorney General advise this House and my constituency what her office is doing to help parents involved in custody disputes resolve their differences outside of the court system?

Hon Mrs Boyd: There are a number of different initiatives that are under way in terms of trying to have alternative dispute mechanisms around these issues, because I think we all know that the constant returns to court are not very satisfactory and certainly are not always in the best interests of children.

One of the primary things we have done is to institute a number of supervised access projects around the province, because these supervised access projects, 14 of them as pilot projects, help people to ensure that access provision is met without the two disputing parents necessarily having to have contact and with the child being in a safe place, so that if there are any concerns about the safety of the child or the possibility that the child might be abducted, those fears are laid to rest.

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Mrs Boyd: We certainly find that is resolving a lot of the conflict between parents.

NORTHERN ONTARIO HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Frank Mclash (Kenora): My question is to the Minister of Health, if I could have her attention. Madam Minister, on Monday my leader asked you how communities in northern Ontario can expect to receive adequate medical services when your government's

expenditure control plan proposal will prevent doctors from practising in the north.

Madam Minister, you replied, and I quote: "There are many opportunities for...young physicians...on other than a fee-for-service basis. There are community health centres, there are HSOs, there are public health units which are anxious to have doctors," in their services.

Madam Minister, you must know that northern Ontario currently has 9% of the province's population, yet only 5.5% of its physicians. Minister, we add to that the geographic barriers that residents of the north face in travelling long distances to see a doctor.

My question is, Minister, can you tell us which community health centres, health service organizations or public health units in the north will be given extra funds by your ministry in order to employ the graduating class of 1993?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): No, I can't give that kind of a specific answer today, but I can tell the member that there are a number of communities in the north that are actively seeking practitioners. It is certainly our hope that in our discussions with the Ontario Medical Association—and I would emphasize that the proposals have been put before the Ontario Medical Association—it has chosen to release them. I hope they will soon come and sit down with us and discuss that whole series of proposals. It is certainly my expectation and hope that from that discussion will come a better way of providing services where they are needed, and I include many areas of the north as being areas where in fact doctors are required.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): My colleague the member for Kenora has really laid out the factors of why the ministry has traditionally, basically classified northern Ontario as an underserved area. He's given you the stats and the population figures, but your ministry now only says that five regions and counties in Ontario are basically underserved, and you've now eliminated the north from that program.

You admitted today in your earlier response, and your other officials have said, that at least 60 to 70 family physicians are needed in northern Ontario, but you've cut the very program from underneath them to attract those people out there. Don't you know that the new program is stopping the ability of towns like Matheson and Kirkland Lake and Englehart not only to hold on to and retain their physicians, but to attract newly graduated physicians to come north and practise and provide good health care to northern Ontarians?

Hon Mrs Grier: I want to say to the member and to his colleague that I think their characterization of the proposal we have put forward is doing a disservice to northern Ontario, which has recognized that the kind of differential scheme we had proposed might in fact overcome many of the difficulties that northern Ontario

has had in finding practitioners.

There are about 50 communities, small towns, in northern Ontario that are actively seeking practitioners. The designation of underserved areas by counties does not take that into account because there are no counties in northern Ontario. The member opposite knows that.

What we have to do is discuss with the Ontario Medical Association a better way of defining where need is and where professionals can be helped to locate, and that's precisely why that proposal is put on the table and precisely why it is my hope and expectation that the Ontario Medical Association will enter into constructive discussions with us as to how to solve a problem that has existed for a very long time and that all of the other formulas for resolving have failed to address.

DRIVERS' LICENCES

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): My question is to the Minister of Transportation. When interviewed yesterday about the question of graduated licences, you were asked why you couldn't implement the program quicker. You said you want "to get all of the bugs out of the system. We're heading towards it as fast as possible."

You're not, Minister. I'm asking you directly today, why don't you bring in legislation for first and second reading before the House rises for the summer, and then we can have the legislation passed as soon as the House comes back in September?

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation): The opposition was a party to the draft proposed legislation vis-à-vis graduated drivers' licences. The Insurance Bureau of Canada was also a partner. The loyal opposition was also a partner, and we've agreed unanimously that in terms of due process we will involve all the participants and, more importantly, the people of Ontario. It's called fine-tuning. It means doing something right.

Then—you've guessed it, Mr Speaker—we come back to the Legislative Assembly, to this place, and we go through the political process, the process of legislation, and while we're doing this, parallel to doing this, what we do is reform the system, which impacts on 350,000 new entrants who will be joining the 6.5 million people who already have a licence in good standing.

By way of conclusion, sir, we're moving as quickly as possible. We're cognizant, we're sympathetic to the need of the marketplace to have graduated drivers' licences as soon as we can humanly deliver.

Mr Turnbull: That is what is known as bafflegab. When there was a private member's bill introduced in this House to stop young people betting below the age of 18, it was through in a matter of weeks. You were very quick in bringing through legislation which killed

jobs in this province. Why can't you bring through legislation?

I can tell you, there's no trick to drafting this legislation. Nova Scotia already has legislation. You and I, Minister, can sit down this afternoon and we can make a few additions and deletions and bring it forward as draft legislation together. We can get on with talking about it, instead of waiting a year, and over a thousand people will be killed in the meantime.

Get on with it. Will you bring in legislation before the House rises and have it debated for first and second reading?

Hon Mr Pouliot: In 1991, 1,100 people lost their lives on the roads of Ontario. In the same year, 1991, 90,000 Ontarians suffered injuries due to collisions. Again in 1991, 213,000 people were involved in accidents. This is a massive endeavour. The very people—and I say this with the highest of respect, for they had positive participation, positive input, helped us set the course—they are the ones. Collectively, we all said: "Let's go to public hearings. Let's do it right, so we don't have to go back with amendments and correct and so on." This is a massive endeavour. It's a step in the right direction. A few more months and we'll be there, and we'll be there for ever.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The time for oral questions has expired.

Mr Turnbull: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The minister has totally failed to answer a very simple question. I'm not satisfied with this answer, and I'm putting him on notice that I'm bringing the late show on this. This is not satisfactory.

The Speaker: I trust the member will file the necessary document at the table.

1450

MEMBERS' PRIVILEGES

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Last Thursday, the member for Leeds-Grenville, Mr Runciman, rose in the House on a question of privilege. The member indicated that his privileges had been violated because certain ministers had yet to respond to questions he had placed in the course of oral question period on two separate days in the previous week. The ministers had apparently taken the questions as notice.

In response to the member's concern, let me say that standing order 33(a), which provides that a "minister may take an oral question as notice to be answered orally on a future sessional day," does not require the question to be answered within a specified time, nor does it provide for an enforcement mechanism.

On a separate matter, the member indicated that members' privileges have been violated by virtue of a meeting between the Premier and a senior ministry official. The member went to some effort to research what is often referred to as the convention of respon-

sible government, but I have to say that his submissions do not constitute grounds for intervention by the Speaker.

I say then that no prima facie case of privilege has been established on the matters raised by the member for Leeds-Grenville, but I do thank him sincerely for the way in which he brought this matter to the attention of the House and to the Speaker.

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We strongly protest the unfair and differential treatment our community has received at the hands of the Rae government. After extensive review and consultation one year ago, the Rae government confirmed the computer and telecommunications services move of 280 jobs to downtown Brantford. A few weeks ago, the site was purchased and the project sign erected. On April 20, Brantford MPP Brad Ward told the community not to worry, the commitment was still good. Then on April 23, without warning and without explanation, the CTS move was cancelled.

"We protest this deception. Thousands of Brantford area workers lost their jobs when our two main industries closed for good a few years ago. Today, our community still suffers from high unemployment. We do not have a university. No significant federal or provincial department is located here. We were counting on CTS as an important part of a comprehensive strategy for recovery for our community and its downtown. Money has been spent, much work and planning has been done. We call on Premier Rae to end the betrayal and honour the deal.

"We, the undersigned citizens and residents of the Brantford area, urge Premier Rae to honour his personal commitment solemnly made to our community to relocate the computer and telecommunications division of the Ministry of Government Services to Brantford by 1995."

It is signed by just under 2,000 residents of the Brantford area, and I affix my signature to the petition.

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws, like everyone else; and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws

which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured part of Ontario's natural environment;

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation; to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

That's signed by 86 signatures, and I would affix my name to it.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities."

In addition to labour, business and political groups, this particular petition, which has over 15,000 signatures on it, is supported by the signators here who are from Scarborough, Pickering and other areas in the greater Toronto area. I have affixed my signature to the petition.

GAMBLING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, *Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome*. Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

This petition is signed by about 24 names, and I am happy to sign my name and lend support to this petition.

HOSPITAL FINANCING

Mr David Winniger (London South): I have a petition signed by 409 individuals petitioning the government of Ontario to provide funding to allow Victoria Hospital in London to be consolidated into one operation on the Westminster site in the interests of patient care, and I've affixed my signature thereto.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has had a historical concern for the poor in society, who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is practised; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos, despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the

people of Ontario;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and very questionable initiative."

I affix my signature to this.

1500

Mr Will Ferguson (Kitchener): I have a petition to present on behalf of the residents of Kitchener and Kitchener-Wilmot. In the interests of using time as a dynamic, I'll dispense with the whereases. It states:

"We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that the appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition from people opposed to casino gambling. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally portrayed itself as having a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has claimed to have a historical concern for the poor in society who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to

establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

As I'm in agreement, I have signed this petition.

DRIVERS' LICENCES

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a petition from my riding of Dufferin-Peel as a result of the number of motor vehicle accidents involving young people in my riding. It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the recent death and injury of five youths within the riding of Dufferin-Peel has deeply disturbed the residents; and

"Whereas these deaths might have been prevented if legislation concerning graduated licensing had been in place; and

"Whereas we would like to prevent further deaths and injuries to our new drivers and young people,

"We would like to petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to bring forward legislation to introduce graduated licensing within the province of Ontario."

There are 26 signatures on this petition from Grand Valley and the town of Orangeville, and I have affixed my signature to this petition.

SPEED LIMITS

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition here:

"That the Ministry of Transportation be advised that the council of the corporation of the town of Uxbridge objects in the strongest of possible terms to the recent increase in allowable speed through the portions of Goodwood which are actively used by residents and requests that the ministry remove the signs and return the speed limit to 50 kilometres."

This petition was passed in the form of a resolution by the council of the corporation of the town of Uxbridge on the date of March 8 this year, 1993. I'm very concerned about this and have signed this petition.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2

billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

This is part of a petition of over 15,000 signatures. These particular signatures are from the Cottam, Harrow and Kingsville area. I attach my name.

GAMBLING

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I have affixed my signature to this petition.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that says:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

This petition is signed by 62 people who primarily live in the city of Woodstock and the village of Princeton.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

This is part of a petition of hundreds of signatures from the good people of Brampton North.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mrs Marland from the standing committee on government agencies presented the committee's first report.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Do you wish to make a brief statement?

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I'm very happy to make the report on behalf of government agencies and to congratulate the appointments of the people therein.

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 106(g)(11), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROVINCIAL OFFENCES AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES INFRACTIONS PROVINCIALES

On motion by Mr Callahan, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 11, An Act to amend the Provincial Offences Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les infractions provinciales.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): You have a brief statement?

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): The Provincial Offences Act took us a long way in terms of making it easier for people to deal with matters under the Highway Traffic Act. This gives them a third option. This allows individuals to go in to a justice of the peace, rather than setting a trial date, and seek to have the matter reduced to a lesser charge. If the justice of the peace and the authorities consider it appropriate, it can be done there.

The purpose of doing that is to avoid the present practice of matters being set for trial and at the time of the trial the person coming in and in fact just pleading to something lesser and clogging the trial lists of our courts. I would submit that this will go a long way towards reducing those trial lists and ensuring the trial lists are dealing with just trials and the trials are held on the days they're set for.

WRONGFUL DISMISSAL RIGHTS ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LES DROITS DES PERSONNES VICTIMES D'UN RENVOI INJUSTIFIÉ

On motion by Mr Callahan, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 12, An Act to protect Persons from Losing their Legal Rights on being Wrongfully Dismissed / Loi visant à empêcher que les personnes victimes d'un renvoi injustifié ne perdent leurs droits reconnus par la loi.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Mr Callahan, would you like to make a brief statement?

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): The purpose of this bill is to ensure that anyone who is told that their job has been terminated is not coerced or required to sign any type of document waiving any rights they may have. More often than not, people who have lost their jobs and perhaps have a remedy in terms of being wrongfully dismissed are offered some type of compensation or in fact are told that if they don't sign it they won't get a recommendation for another job. The purpose of this amendment is to ensure that no person would be entitled to sign any documents that could be used against them in any claim they might have for being wrongfully dismissed without receiving independent legal advice.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS RELATIVES AUX MUNICIPALITÉS

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management / Loi modifiant certaines lois relatives aux municipalités en ce qui concerne la gestion des déchets.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): It was agreed that we would have a deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management. Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1512 to 1517.

The Deputy Speaker: Will the members please take their seats.

Mr Hayes has moved second reading of Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management.

All those in favour will please rise and remain standing, one at a time.

Ayes

Abel, Akande, Allen, Bisson, Boyd, Buchanan, Carter, Charlton, Christopherson, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Dadamo, Drainville, Duignan, Farnan, Ferguson, Fletcher, Frankford, Grier, Haeck, Hampton, Hansen, Harrington, Haslam, Hayes, Hope, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Kormos, Lankin, Laughren, Mackenzie, MacKinnon, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martel, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Pouliot, Silipo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Wessinger, White, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wiseman, Wood, Ziemba.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please rise, one at a time.

Nays

Arnott, Brown, Callahan, Caplan, Carr, Conway, Cousens, Cunningham, Eddy, Elston, Eves, Grand-maitre, Harnick, Harris, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kwinter, Mahoney, Marland, McClelland, McGuinty, McLean, Miclash, Murphy, O'Neil (Quinte), Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poirier, Poole, Ramsay, Runciman, Ruprecht, Sola, Stockwell, Turnbull, Villeneuve, Wilson (Simcoe West), Witmer.

The Deputy Speaker: The ayes are 62; the nays are 38. I declare the motion carried. Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Agreed. Which committee?

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): Mr Speaker, I'd like to move that Bill 70 be referred to the standing committee on resources development.

PAY EQUITY AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'ÉQUITÉ SALARIALE

Ms Murdock moved third reading of Bill 102, An Act to amend the Pay Equity Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'équité salariale.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): We'll wait just for a moment until members leave the chamber; then we'll proceed.

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): It is indeed a pleasure for me to move third reading of Bill 102, the Pay Equity Amendment Act. This is a measure of historic impact for the working women of Ontario.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Order.

Ms Murdock: I want to repeat that this is going to be of historic impact for working women of Ontario. By passing this legislation, the honourable members will make pay equity attainable for another 420,000 working women in this province.

The major amendments in Bill 102 provide new tools to achieve pay equity: proportional value and proxy comparisons. These measures, pioneered in Ontario, will strengthen our provisions against wage discrimination.

Members will recall that Bill 102 received first and second reading last fall, and in January it was the subject of public hearings by the standing committee on administration of justice. The committee concluded by reporting it favourably for third reading.

At this point I would like to thank the member for Eglinton and the member for Waterloo North, as well as the member for Wellington, for all the hard work they put into the committee and the cooperative nature that they contributed to the committee work.

During those hearings Labour minister Bob Mackenzie repeated his conviction that history will record the achievement of pay equity legislation in Ontario as a landmark accomplishment of our times. Indeed, much has been accomplished; however, much remains to be done. Recent figures from Statistics Canada show that the average earnings of working men still exceed the average working earnings for women by more than 30%.

Let us consider a few more statistics. As of last September, there were more than 2.1 million working women in this province, just over 45% of the workforce, and at least 600,000 of them have achieved or have begun to achieve pay equity, which very simply means working for wages that represent the real value of their work.

With final passage of Bill 102, the proportional value amendment will make pay equity achievable for at least 340,000 more working women, and the implementation of proportional value comparisons will be retroactive to January 1 of this year. Another 80,000 working women in the broader public sector will be able to benefit from the proxy comparison amendment beginning January 1, 1994.

The original Pay Equity Act of 1987 offered only one method for achieving pay equity, job-to-job comparisons, and that too, in its own right, was landmark legislation. While that measure was welcomed on all sides as a good start for pay equity, there was a consensus that the 1987 act passed in this House would require

future modifications, and in time the need for improvements became especially obvious in workplaces that lacked male job classes for comparison purposes. Ironically, workplaces that were all female or predominantly female were the least able to use the job-to-job comparison method that existed in the 1987 Pay Equity Act.

Bill 102 responds very well to those situations and ensures that many working women will benefit from pay equity legislation. As the Minister of Labour announced earlier this year, in addition to Bill 102 the government has undertaken a more immediate measure, the pay equity down payment program.

The members may recall that the \$50-million pay equity down payment program was designed to provide immediate help to some of the lowest-paid women in Ontario's broader public sector. These women are, for the most part, the workers who will benefit from the new measures contained in Bill 102. The down payment program has added as much as \$2,500 to each person's annual base salary.

Through the down payment program, many thousands of workers have received a meaningful start towards the achievement of pay equity, and I am pleased to report today that less than two months after the minister's announcement, close to \$30 million has already been distributed to a range of workers in the broader public sector, including workers in women's shelters, public libraries, immigrant services and community mental health programs.

At lunch-hour today, the member for Lambton was telling me that her community living program people received \$250,000, and that's in the city of Sarnia. So it is moving and it's moving very quickly.

In the coming months, the rest of the down payment funds will be paid out for the child care workers and other homemakers. In future years, most of these workers in the broader public sector will be able to use the proxy comparison method that will become law under Bill 102.

Bill 102 also contains ground-breaking administrative provisions. For instance, when a company or a business is sold, transferred or restructured, its pay equity plan remains protected and in place. In this way, women will not see their pay equity rights vanish or diminish because of workplace changes over which they have no control.

I want to point out that during the public hearings in January, presenters asked for specific improvements in Bill 102, and I'm happy to report that several effective measures have been added. For example, there was a request that procedures for enforcement of orders issued by pay equity review officers be improved, and that has been accomplished under the amended Bill 102.

Another provision of Bill 102 encourages parties to

settle pay equity disputes without resorting to lengthy and expensive legal proceedings. It does so by introducing the use of pre-hearing conferences and by providing for pre-hearing settlements.

Bill 102 does not increase the current requirement that employers devote 1% of the previous year's payroll to the achievement of pay equity. I can't help but reinforce that, that the proxy provision under Bill 102 does not go to the private sector—it only applies to the public sector.

In asking the members of this House to pass third reading of Bill 102, I want to recall that there was a spirit of all-party consensus that was present in this House when the Pay Equity Act was passed in 1987.

In closing, let me say that these new measures, pioneered in Ontario, will add strength to Ontario's provisions against the historic and systemic wage discrimination that working women have endured for far too long.

1530

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments? Further debate? The member for Eglinton.

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): It gives me great pleasure to rise today in this Legislature and talk about an issue that is very dear to my heart; that is, the equality of women and what a difference pay equity makes to that.

I know there are some people in this Legislature and in the province who question the need for pay equity, and first of all, I'd like to address that particular question. Then I plan to go into a bit of the history of pay equity and how we got where we are today, to talk about Bill 102 and its predecessor, Bill 168, and what Bill 102 does, and then to talk about some of the concerns expressed: the concerns about cost, the concerns of the business community, concerns about proxy, some of the concerns expressed about delay and about the weakening of maintenance. But first, I'd like to talk about whether there is a need for pay equity, and the parliamentary assistant touched on this particular issue.

There are those who believe that women are simply being impatient by not just waiting, that slowly but surely the problem will rectify itself, but I fear the statistics show something very different. If we look at the Statscan statistics for 1989, when they look at the distribution of earnings for working females, they find that 70% of women earn under \$30,000—1989, a mere four years ago. Of that, there are almost 34% who earn under \$10,000, there are 12.4% who earn between \$10,000 and \$15,000 and 12.7% who earn between \$15,000 and \$20,000. You can tell from those particular statistics that as far as women have come in pay and in reaching equality, we still have a long way to go.

There are other statistics I'd like to share with you, and these are even more recent statistics from 1991, and

again, from Statistics Canada. It was based on who earns what and it looked at women's incomes both at the higher-paid level, the professional level, and at the bottom-paid workers.

"A big leap in women's incomes was the big story in new data released by Statistics Canada yesterday." This was an article based on April 14, 1993, so you can tell, very recently. "Figures from the 1991 census show women's incomes rose sharply compared to men's in the late 1980s even though there's still a big gap between what both earn. Statscan said the average income for women in 1990 had risen about 14% since 1985 compared to the average income for men which remained almost unchanged. Statscan's data shows, however, that the average salary for men was almost \$30,000 in 1990 compared to about \$18,000 for women.

"Women made strong inroads in high-paying occupations," Statscan said in its report, indicating women represented about 20% of the earners in Canada's top-paying jobs compared to 14% in 1985. And women's increased earning power also helped widen the gap between what single-income families earned compared to families with two wage-earning parents, the agency reported. But Statscan also noted that women still dominate the country's lowest-paid occupations, making up almost 75% of all earners in the 10 poorest-paying occupations."

They gave some examples of the top 10—judges and magistrates, physicians and surgeons, dentists, lawyers, senior managers, other managers, air pilots, chiropractors, engineers and university teachers—and of the top 10, 80% of those occupations were held by men. They gave the bottom 10—livestock farm workers, sewing machine and textile workers, general farming and horticultural jobs, crop farm workers, bartenders, cleaners, service station attendants, housekeepers, food and beverage service and child care workers—and of the bottom 10, 75% were women. So you can see that we have improved, but there is still a long way to go.

The latest statistics have shown that there is a rise in what an average woman earns compared to the average man. In 1987, I believe it was in the vicinity of 67 cents on the dollar. Now women are all the way up to 70 cents on the dollar. Part of that has been through programs that have been aggressively pursued, such as pay equity. But again, I think the statistics clearly show that we haven't achieved the equality we would like.

I'd like to read just a portion of an editorial that was in the *Globe and Mail*, January 1993, because I think it perpetrated a few myths. I won't quote from the entire thing, but I think it's important for members to hear what's being said:

"The subject is the much-ballyhooed wage gap between men and women, documented annually by Statistics Canada and eagerly lapped up by the nation's newspapers and television news shows. Faint praise is

in order this year, however, because three ingredients that are central to understanding the wage difference—education, hours worked and marriage—received at least passing mention in some of last week's coverage.

"It was reported that women's wages rose to 69.6% of men's in 1991, from 67.6% the year before. But what does that mean? For starters, it does not mean, despite the"—let me try to get this word out—

Ms Murdock: Obfuscatory.

Ms Poole: Thank you. The parliamentary assistant said it right, I hope, Hansard. Try again: the "obfuscatory efforts of those"—I think that means sort of like misleading and not getting us in the right direction; anyway, despite the efforts of those who know better, "that women are being paid nearly one third less to do the same jobs. Crunch the numbers a bit further and other interesting facts pop up. Education, for one thing, matters. Women with a university degree earn more, not less, than men with lower levels of education. When one considers that a majority of those enrolled in Canadian universities are female—55.3% of full- and part-time university students are women—it's hard to imagine a future in which the wage difference will not continue to narrow."

Well, I was just outraged when I read particularly that last paragraph, because they're comparing women with a university degree and saying, "Isn't it wonderful that they're earning more than men who don't have a university degree?" Well, surely that's not where we're at. So I wrote a letter to the editor, which they did publish, and I'd like to read that on the record:

"Your editorial of January 21 concerning the 'much-ballyhooed wage gap' is misleading in its simplistic analysis and selective use of statistics. I agree with you that education, hours worked and experience are important factors in determining wages. But when you are making comparisons, it is important to compare apples to apples. For instance, your editorial stated that 'Women with a university degree earn more, not less, than men with lower levels of education.' I am dismayed that you would find this either surprising or relevant. Of far greater relevance would be a comparison of the wages of university-educated men and university-educated women.

"Consider the following Ontario employment statistics from 1989. Amongst whites, women with a university degree earn 66%—that's just over \$31,000—of the income of men with degrees, who earned on average \$48,000." That's comparing apples to apples, Mr Speaker. "Women from racial minorities with degrees earned 56% of what men from universities earned.

"You also ask: 'Why is it that many married women work only part-time or adopt less time-consuming and less well-paying full-time careers? Are they forced to by their husbands, by circumstances, by entrenched social

attitudes? Do many, for a whole variety of unquantifiable reasons, freely choose this path, thinking it best for their families?"

"One significant answer the editors have ignored is that unfortunately, in all too many cases, women still bear the primary responsibility for child care. They do not 'freely choose this path' necessarily, but are forced to by lack of options. I do believe that education and the recent profusion of women into the professions will have a positive effect on the wage gap in the future.

"However, I fear that without enlightened child care policies, a reasoned pay equity approach significantly closing the wage gap will for ever remain an elusive goal."

1540

I wrote that letter because I think it's very important that we not perpetuate some myths that are out there. While we have made progress, we still must work to ensure that women are paid appropriately. We must also work to ensure that women are not stuck in what I call pink ghettos, where their work is undervalued.

According to a Globe article that was just in the paper this morning—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Considering the importance of this discussion, I think we should have a quorum present.

The Deputy Speaker: Table, would you please check if there is a quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Eglinton.

Ms Poole: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the member for Etobicoke West for bringing to the House's attention that pay equity is an important issue and that it is important for as many members as possible to participate in this debate.

As I was saying, it really is encouraging to see more women going into the higher-paid jobs and it's also encouraging to see that attitudes are changing. Last week, I went to a Women's Awareness Week that was held at Sporting Life and I was addressing a group of 9- and 10-year-old school children. I decided to talk to them about stereotypes, about boys and girls and what types of jobs they could go into and what they wanted to do with their lives.

Do you know the interesting thing? For the first three young girls I asked, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" their answers were, one wanted to be a teacher, the second wanted to be an orthodontist and the third wanted to be an engineer. I thought, "That is

really, really good." There was also one later on who wanted to be a mother, and I thought that was marvelous as well, because we need women who would like to stay at home, we need fathers who would like to stay at home, and if they have the financial capacity to do that, that's certainly to be encouraged.

But what I found remarkable was that these young girls didn't see the barriers in their way, and I think that's half the battle. So we are gradually making progress, but as the statistics show, the progress is very slow and women's work is still undervalued.

I thought I would let you know what type of women it would be who would benefit from pay equity. Obviously, there are many in the private sector who benefit from pay equity, but there's a specific list of those in the public sector who would benefit from legislation extending pay equity to them.

They're people like the visiting homemakers, home support services, those working in homes for the aged, children's aid societies, shelters for battered women, child care workers, those who are working with the physically handicapped, those working in elderly persons' centres, Indian friendship centres, credit counselling, children's mental health, children and youth services, developmental services, children's boarding homes, nursing homes, community mental health centres, public health units, laundries, community health centres, residential psychiatric services, district health councils, rehabilitation and child treatment centres, labs, small hospitals and libraries.

The women in these occupations are not well paid, and those are ones that are particularly targeted to improve their wages and bring about pay equity.

I had an interesting experience last fall. It was actually before the introduction of Bill 102. It was while we were still on the assumption that Bill 168 was proceeding. I had a women's issue outreach tour across the province, and I went to a number of communities, some larger, some smaller. I went to London, Waterloo, Kitchener, Windsor, Ottawa, Timmins, Oshawa, just to name a few.

One of the questions that I asked the women when I visited these various women's groups—some of whom worked in battered women's shelters, some of whom were business and professional women's club members, some who worked for the YWCA—was:

"We have pay equity before the Legislature right now and there seems to be two distinct views on it. One is that now is not the time for pay equity because business is struggling, that it is extremely difficult for business to implement this when they're trying to simply survive, and there are concerns about the bureaucracy involved;" on the other hand, the arguments for pay equity as I advanced them earlier, in terms of improving women's lot in life as far as wages are concerned.

The interesting thing was that when I asked the question, "Should we pass this pay equity legislation?" they would say, "On the one hand, this really is a tough time for business and I'm not sure we should really be putting this onerous burden on them at this time." I said, "So you think we shouldn't pass pay equity?" and they'd say: "Oh no, no. On the other hand, if you don't do it now, when are you going to do it?"

The interesting thing is that a number of these groups such as the YWCA, the children's aid societies, a number of people in the business and professional women's clubs, were in the throes of either implementing pay equity themselves or anticipating doing it under the new legislation.

So I said to them: "Well, yes, I'm the same; I see the concerns from both sides. But I need an answer. If you were the Liberal critic for women's issues and you had to stand up in the House and say how you were going to vote on this, what would you do?" And they said, "We really are reluctant to say 'Stop pay equity,' because we are afraid that if we stop pay equity, it may never start again." So there was that willingness to proceed, even though they recognized that there were problems.

Now, Bill 168 is not the bill we have before us today. It is significantly altered since that time. I haven't been back, because I've been in the Legislature, to ask them how they would change their opinion, or if they would change their opinion, given the changes in Bill 102.

But I thought it very interesting that women themselves are very anxious about pay equity legislation. They really want it, but they, at the bottom line, also are very concerned about their jobs. They would want to ensure that they still have jobs, and if it is going to make it so onerous for their particular business or their particular agency that it can't continue to operate, then obviously they are concerned about what pay equity would do.

So it's not only men who say there are two sides to pay equity and some concerns expressed; women are expressing that same ambivalence, where they think pay equity is a very supportable notion—and I think many men believe that as well—but they worry about the timing.

I guess for me this has also created a dilemma. The reason I have supported the extension of pay equity is because how can you say it's the wrong time? Are we saying that there is a right time for equity and a wrong time for equity? Is there a right time for fairness and a wrong time for fairness? In my own examination of where I would stand on this bill, when we were looking at Bill 168 and when we had second reading on Bill 102, I came to the conclusion that there is probably never any perfect time to bring in a program like pay equity. It is somewhat easier in boom times and it is certainly more difficult in depressed times such as we're

undergoing right now, but in the bottom line, there is not a wrong and right time for fairness and equity.

1550

But that being said, we still have to examine the legislation that is before us today and determine if this is the right way to do it. Is this the right way to extend pay equity? Is it going to bring fairness and equity? Is it going to do what women want it to do? That's something that I plan to explore with you today.

Just before we do that, I'd like to just refresh with members the history of pay equity in Ontario. I think members will remember the NDP-Liberal accord back in 1985. One of the areas in which the Liberals and NDP reached accord was the fact that we both believed in pay equity, and there was an agreement that the Liberal government would proceed with pay equity in its first term in office.

That's why the Liberals did keep that commitment and they brought forward the Pay Equity Act in 1987. I'm very proud of that legislation. It wasn't perfect, it wasn't without its drawbacks, it wasn't without its growing pains, but as a woman and as a Liberal I am very proud that Ontario is the only jurisdiction in North America which requires the preparation of pay equity plans in both the private and the public sectors, and I'm not ashamed for us to take credit for that achievement.

The Pay Equity Act, 1987, brought pay equity to approximately 1.4 million women out of the approximately 1.7 million women who were working for employers who were covered under the act. Right from the beginning we recognized that there was a deficiency, that there were women not covered. But we felt that it was important to go ahead and take that major first step, and that major first step was to allow job-to-job comparisons. The drawback was that you couldn't have the job-to-job comparisons where there was no male comparator within the establishment. So that is something, as I say, we were aware of at the time and that we made a commitment to redress.

The Pay Equity Commission released a report that had been commissioned in October 1989, in which it recommended two new methods of achieving pay equity. There were two new comparison methods that they recommended. One was proxy and the second was proportional. Now, the Liberal government was very supportive of the proportional method, but we did have a number of concerns with the proxy method.

First of all, we thought it was very problematic to try to compare one establishment with another establishment, for a number of reasons. One is that you're comparing payrolls, for instance, involving extremely sensitive matters and confidential payroll information; the second is the complexity of it; and the third is that it really did not mesh with what the true purpose of pay equity was, as defined. "Pay equity," as it was defined, was to bring equity into the same establishment; that

was one of the definitions of pay equity that was used.

So proxy was not something that we looked on favourably, although we did support the proportional value method at that time. The proportional value method, which allowed businesses or agencies to compare themselves with others in a similar situation by way of—I'm trying to think of a simple way to explain this. It's a comparison method which is used still within the same establishment but it would give values to male jobs and female jobs, and it does not have to compare them directly but can compare them indirectly. I think that was the advantage of the proportional value method.

In February 1990, the Minister of Labour under the Liberal government announced that the Liberal government would be proceeding with the proportional value method, and of the 420,000 women we're talking about today, I think there are approximately 350,000 who would be covered under the proportional announcement made in February 1990. That's the state we were at when the government changed.

Just before we go on to talk about Bill 168 and what got introduced, I will say that there was an alternative to the proxy method that was supported by the Liberal government, and that was the wage enhancement scheme.

One of the advantages of the wage enhancement scheme was that it was a way for the government in a very controlled way to improve women's wages. In fact, there were several areas where the Liberal government had done this, with social service workers and with child care workers, that proved to be enormously successful.

The child care wage improvement was a fantastic success. There's no doubt today that child care workers are still not paid what they're worth and that their value is still not fully recognized, but I can tell you that it has improved enormously since I was first elected in 1987.

The first time I ran in 1985, I think the average wage of a child care worker was something like between \$10,000 and \$12,000 across the province, and I think we all recognize that that is simply not acceptable. But about a year ago there was a day care pay survey that showed that Ontario day care workers under the wage enhancement plan had significantly improved their fortunes, and I'll read that for you. This was an article in the Toronto Star dated April 24, 1992.

"Ontario day care workers fare much better than counterparts in other provinces, a national survey shows. Day care workers in Ontario earn an average of \$11.38 an hour compared to wages below \$7 an hour in some provinces.

"Ontario day care workers earn an average of \$22,983 a year. In Metro, the average annual wage is \$25,000. The figures are for child care workers who are in charge

of a group of children and who often have supervisory duties. Workers in municipally run day care centres in Metro do even better, with an average annual salary of \$29,000."

I wouldn't want you to believe from this that everything's just fine for child care workers. Many of them are still underpaid and what they're paid varies across the province, but I just wanted to show you what wage enhancements could do to improve the lot of a certain sector.

One of the whole purposes of pay equity was to ensure that women's work was not undervalued. For instance, do members of this House consider it acceptable that a child care worker would be paid less than a zookeeper? What does that say for our values in society if we are willing to tolerate that situation? And it's not that I don't like animals; I like them very much and I think they should be well cared for and well treated. But I certainly value our children more, and it is my belief that child care workers should be valued for what they are doing.

I mentioned that Bill 168 was introduced by the NDP government. It did not come soon and it did not come without a lot of agitation on the part of day care advocates and pay equity advocates who kept pressing the government to introduce legislation. The government had made commitments during the 1990 election, it had made commitments to pursue pay equity in November 1990 in the throne speech, and yet it was a full year later, in November 1991, when Bill 168 was introduced.

The reaction to Bill 168 was quite positive on the part of day care advocates. They were concerned that it had taken so long to get to Bill 168, but month after month for the next year they kept waiting for it to come forward for debate in the Legislature, and they were becoming very, very anxious when the government had made no indication that it was proceeding with Bill 168.

In the fall of 1992, I asked the question of the Minister of Labour whether he was indeed going to proceed with Bill 168. He blustered quite a bit and then he said yes, they intended to proceed with pay equity. Some 10 days later, Bill 102 appeared. Bill 102 was certainly not what was promised in Bill 168, and there are some significant changes.

I want to give you a few quotes, before I discuss the changes, as to the reaction to, first of all, the delay, and Bill 102, because although the government put a brave face on it, there was no doubt that it had waited two and a half years and had delayed for two and a half years before introducing legislation and proceeding with legislation and that it was significantly weakened from what it had originally promised.

1600

I want to refer to an article in the Toronto Star dated November 29, 1992. They tell a story of Nancy Easton,

and I'll quote from the article.

"Premier Bob Rae has done more than hit Nancy Easton in the pocketbook. As far as she's concerned, he has insulted her professionalism and set her career back light-years.

"Easton is a Toronto child care worker, one of at least 420,000 Ontario women who will have to wait three years longer for the New Democratic government to fulfil its promise of full pay equity.

"Easton is now questioning the future of day care in Ontario after the decision Wednesday by Queen's Park to hold off extending the principle of pay equity for work of equal value to the broader public sector—women who weren't covered because they work in facilities that lack direct male counterparts against which their wages can be compared.

"I've been offered other jobs over the years, but I've stuck to child care because I believe that some day, eventually, its importance to society has to be finally recognized," said Easton.

"What the government has been promising us was only a down payment on what we deserve, and now they've dashed even those meagre hopes. Who's going to want to do this job? What sort of quality is that going to ensure?"

The article also quoted another woman, day care provider Cheryl West. She said that she's not sure how much longer she can continue to pay to have her own child looked after while she works.

"The insecurity is overwhelming," said the single mother. "I've thought of leaving the field in the past, and it's on my mind once again. We're facing more and more responsibilities, and the compensation is shocking."

"West said her disappointment at the delayed implementation of full equity 'is not just a matter of finances—there's a principle at stake here too. Our centre was taking a case to the Pay Equity Commission, but we decided to put it aside on the day that the NDP was elected. We trusted their promises. Now we're going to be dusting it off again.'"

At the same time, right after the NDP announced Bill 102, which delays pay equity for a large number of women in this province, Kerry McCuaig, who is executive director of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, which, as members know, represents 14,000 women in non-profit child care centres who would benefit from the extension of pay equity, said that recruiting professionals is going to be more difficult than ever.

"Child care careers are starting to have a lifespan of about five years. A lot of women are going into the field because they love kids, but they can't afford to hang in: you can't eat love. We want highly skilled workers with a college education, but we don't treat

them like professionals.”

Now, when Kerry McCuaig said this, she was representing the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care at a press conference. This press conference was called by the Equal Pay Coalition, the Coalition of Visible Minority Women and the Union of Child Care Workers of Eastern Ontario. Together, the five organizations called a press conference after the government delayed the implementation of pay equity. They had been waiting for two years. I copied a few of their quotes down at that press conference.

They said, “This government is good for a lot of announced dollars which translate into nothing.” These women said they were tired of having announcements made by the government which the government got full credit for, yet the moneys never flowed, the programs never happened. They said the government was petty to delay pay equity for this sector of underpaid workers. Remember I told you about them earlier; 70% of the women in this province earn under \$30,000 a year.

What they said was: “Have we delayed pay equity for our sector out of existence?” They talked about the delay and they talked about the fact they were convinced, and this is the Coalition for Better Child Care, that there would not be moneys flowed to their sector for the extension of pay equity till 1995.

I, over the years in this Legislature, have become a little bit cynical, as probably all members have, but when the coalition pointed this out and said 1995, it rang a bell. 1995? Probably the next election year, and that’s where moneys start to flow. So the government wouldn’t even have to account for those dollars till after the election, and even then odds are very, very good—and if any of the members of the government look at the recent polls, I think they’ll confirm this—that the NDP will not form the next government. So what they in effect are going to say is, “We get the bang for the buck for announcing the extension of pay equity, but we’re going to let some other government pay for it.”

I noted at that press conference a high degree of cynicism amongst the women who had been relying on this government to bring in pay equity, and they were saying that the delay was on the backs of those who are the most vulnerable. They said, “These women are the bottom of the pay echelon, they’re the ones most in need, but the government has said, ‘You can wait.’” This government told the doctors two years ago that they couldn’t wait; they could get \$400 million. This government told the unions that they didn’t have to wait; they would get their Bill 40. But for these women, they were told that they have to wait.

I’m going to take a direct quote from something that was said that day: “How can you feel anything but anger? How can you feel but you’ve been used?” These women feel betrayed, because they believed the prom-

ises of the government and they believed Bill 168.

I think what made everything worse was that the Premier had already been claiming that the legislation was passed. In November 1991 he was saying in his householder, and I happen to have the copy right here, “We have already passed the extension of pay equity.” I think everybody here in this House today knows that pay equity was not passed. But what did he say? He said, “We’ve extended pay equity to cover 420,000 women who work in jobs that until now did not qualify for pay equity increases.”

That was November 1991, a year and a half ago, and yet that pay equity has not been extended to the women, and not only that, to add insult to injury, the government changed what it originally promised. So they not only delayed bringing pay equity in, even though the Premier himself in his householder, in his newsletter, was claiming in November 1991 they’d already done it, but then they changed it and weakened it considerably.

About a week after I got a copy of the Premier’s householder where I heard that, I got a letter from Jill Marzetti, who’s the provincial secretary for the New Democratic Party. She said, “I’m proud, as provincial secretary and as a woman, to give just a short list of what the Ontario New Democrats have done in our first year of government for the women in this province,” and one on the list was, “extended pay equity to an additional 420,000 women who work in jobs that until now did not qualify for pay equity increases.”

I’ll tell you, when I saw those two things back to back, I thought, well, maybe I’d been asleep at the switch. Maybe the government had brought in pay equity and extended it and I hadn’t noticed. I couldn’t believe this was true, but I went to our House leader and I said, “Mr House Leader, can you clarify for me, has the government extended pay equity?” He said: “No, Dianne. No, don’t worry about it. You are absolutely right. The government has not passed pay equity. But they say that they’re going to pass this legislation soon.” This was in the fall of 1991.

Well, we waited. We waited month after month, week after week, day after day, and I, like the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, kept thinking it was going to happen, because I asked a couple of questions in the House, I made a statement or two in the House about it, and we were told, “It’s happening, it’s happening.” In fact the House leader, according to instructions from the government House leader, kept scheduling a debate on pay equity. But we got to November 1992 and that legislation had still not been pursued and debated in the House.

Finally, after two years, the Minister of Labour stood up in this Legislature and he said: “Well, we aren’t actually proceeding with Bill 168. We are going to bring in a new piece of legislation called Bill 102.” He tried to put a brave face on it, but when the legislation

was introduced, he said, "Well, you know, there's going to be a little bit of delay."

1610

But when we examined the legislation, and when we took it to hearings we took a look at it, and what did it do? The first thing that it did was delay the achievement of public sector pay equity for three years. Under the Liberal legislation passed in 1987, pay equity was to have been achieved by the Ontario public service by January 1, 1995. The government reneged on that. They delayed it by a further three years.

There were women who were counting on that. There were women who were waiting for that to happen and they were told, "No, the government has priorities." They can spend millions and millions on advertising and polling and renovating cabinet offices and all sorts of other things, but the women had to wait. I don't really think it's fair to have women who are waiting for five years for that pay equity to come into place and then, on the eve of it, to say, "No, you're going to have to wait another three years."

What kind of message does that send? Does it send a message to the employers who did comply with the legislation, who did come forward with their pay equity plans, who did implement pay equity? Does it say to them, "You sucker"? Because the employers who didn't implement it now get another three years' grace.

The second thing that Bill 102 did was weaken the maintenance provision. This was something that I didn't even realize was as serious as it was until we got into the public hearings. Presenter after presenter came before us and talked about how the Liberal legislation had guaranteed that once pay equity is achieved it must be maintained. In other words, you can't have an employer who, a year after you've achieved pay equity, goes back and reneges on it and changes the rules. But, lo and behold, when we looked through Bill 102, we found a little provision that allows the government to change the rules and weaken the provisions for maintenance of pay equity.

The third concern that a number of people shared was the proxy method itself. They were concerned with the language of the proxy method. They were concerned with the comparisons of female jobs to female jobs, because that was never the purpose of pay equity; it was comparing female jobs to male jobs. They didn't like the terms of reference that the government had adopted and a number were concerned about the complexity.

The other concern was, who's going to pay for it? That is an extremely important question, because we have to know what it would cost. Will the government pay for the pay equity adjustments in the broader public sector? Because if they don't, what's going to happen is the agencies will only have two alternatives: They will have to cut staff or they will have to cut services. In either eventuality, that's not what we hope to achieve

with pay equity legislation.

The interesting thing was that when the government introduced Bill 102 and then said we were going to be debating it the next week, even though it was a new bill that we hadn't really had time to go through and analyse, I sent a message over to the Ministry of Labour and said: "Look, I need some background information. I want you to tell us what impact the delay's going to have. What is this plan going to cost? What would it have cost before the delays were announced and what's it going to cost now?"

I got a very vague answer back from the Ministry of Labour. They said, "In 1992-93 up to \$240 million will be spent, but we really can't tell you how much is going to be spent, because we haven't completed the surveys of pay equity costs until they're returned from the transfer payment agencies." It seemed rather strange that the government was proceeding with legislation when it didn't even know what it cost. But I accepted that until the next day, when I was talking to one of the agencies.

They said: "Oh, the cost? We have those data." I said, "How did you get these data?" They said, "We got it from the Ontario Federation of Labour." I said, "How did the Ontario Federation of Labour get it?" "They've got a letter." It's a letter to Carrol Anne Sceviour of the Ontario Federation of Labour, 15 Gervais Drive in Toronto. It was sent from the Ministry of Labour, the policy division, signed by Salina Szechtman. There were copies sent to the deputy, the Minister of Labour, the special assistant of policy and the director for workplace practices policy group.

Anyway, this letter which the Ministry of Labour had sent to the Ontario Federation of Labour said funds for pay equity were allocated as follows: "Dollars in mature costs by 1994-95 fiscal year: Job to job, \$175 million; proportional value, \$400 million; proxy to equity, \$285 million; OPS pay equity, \$140 million," with a total of \$1 billion.

I have no problem with the Ministry of Labour coming to me and saying, "We can't give you exact figures because we haven't completed our surveys," although I would have thought those surveys should have been completed before they went ahead with legislation. They had a lot of time. They had two years to do this. I wouldn't have had nearly as much of a problem if they'd said, "They're not exact, but we can give you estimates." But the Ministry of Labour didn't want to share that with the critic for women's issues for the Liberal caucus, and I found that rather upsetting, quite frankly.

I'm just going to reach over to Hansard for a moment. This is Hansard from the pay equity committee hearings when in fact we asked the minister and the deputy minister what it was going to cost. What became very obvious was that they really didn't know. It was incredible that they'd be implementing a program, a

very costly program, but they didn't know how much it was going to cost.

One of the questions Mr Tilson had asked as a follow-up—he said he was obviously getting nowhere with his question which had already been referred to by our caucus and Mr Tilson followed up and he wasn't satisfied with the answers or the non-answers—was: "I'm going to ask the question again. I know it was asked, but it seems logical. You're getting into something. You must have some idea what it will cost. What is it going to cost the taxpayers of this province to implement these pieces of legislation?"

All they could say was that the government remains committed to paying \$1 billion, but they had no cost-benefit analysis; they had no analysis as to what the effect of the delay was going to be; they had no analysis of how much was coming out in any fiscal year.

So then Mr Tilson asked a fairly simplistic question, I thought. I thought it was very easy to understand and a very good question: "What's it going to cost next year?" Mr Thomson, who was the Deputy Minister of Labour, said, "I don't know," period, end of his answer. "I don't know."

How can you bring in legislation when you don't know what it's going to cost? And I'll tell you, not only do people want to know what it's going to cost; they want to know who's going to pay for the pay equity because, as I mentioned earlier, agencies are already strapped. The new restraint plan is going to strap them even further, and if they have to pay for pay equity, which they cannot possibly absorb as far as the costs, it is going to be devastating.

I saw just the other day that Ontario hospitals are seeking \$160 million. They're asking Queen's Park for more than \$160 million to fund pay equity. This government's got to tell us, is it going to pay for pay equity to the broader public service? Are they going to pay for these plans? Are they going to ensure that in fact services are not shut down or that people do not lose jobs? We have to know the answer to that question.

All we know right now is that the government has said that in its restraint package it's saving \$340 million by delaying pay equity. We don't know over what period they're talking. We don't know how these figures were arrived at. But I think that's something members of this Legislature deserve to know, and I would have thought that by the time we completed those public hearings those answers would have been forthcoming. But we're at the stage today where we still don't know, and this government doesn't know, what pay equity is going to cost.

1620

One concern that has been raised and that I've touched on briefly has been the impact on business. When we debated this on second reading, one of the

members of the opposition raised the problems faced by business. I got the impression that some members of the government really thought very little of the comments, that they really made light of what the opposition was saying. But let's face reality: Right now it's a very difficult time for business. We've seen daily bankruptcies. We've seen people lose jobs.

I think it is important to recognize that if any government is going to impose a system, even if it's a system we agree with in principle, we have to ensure that there's a sensitivity to its impact. The very best thing that can happen is if employers and employees work together in a cooperative approach, because if it's imposed without the cooperative approach, instead of achieving pay equity it could in fact achieve disaster.

Although I'm a supporter of pay equity, I have to say that there are ramifications which have to be addressed. There are concerns in this bill that have to be addressed. We certainly don't want to get bogged down in bureaucracy, and I'll tell you, the proxy method described in here is getting bogged down in bureaucracy. But much of the substance of the bill is going to be in regulations, and we have to ensure that those regulations do not impose restrictions on businesses which make it impossible for them to operate.

Already there is one thing that has really upset people, and that's the retroactivity of the legislation. Do you know the irony? If the government had brought in pay equity when it said it was going to bring it in, there would have been no need for retroactivity. The retroactivity, which is anathema to me and to many people, was brought in because this government delayed, didn't know what to do, didn't know how to do it. They've created their own problem.

I would just like to read from an article in the *Globe and Mail* of almost a year ago, by Martin Harts, in the small business section. Mr Harts says:

"Ontario is the only province with pay equity laws that directly affect small business. Companies with more than 10 employees—meaning most businesses in Ontario—must comply with pay equity. As the only jurisdiction in North America with sweeping pay equity rules for the private sector, Ontario has been praised and damned, depending on who you talk to.

"Larger companies that went through Ontario's pay equity exercise from 1989 to 1991 generally support the process. These organizations, which typically have a human resources department and at least one in-house compensation specialist, often see the pay equity law as an opportunity to review or update their compensation policies.

"Small companies, on the other hand, have reacted negatively to pay equity. Typical comments from chief executive officers and owner-operators include, 'What's the penalty if I don't comply?' 'Let them catch me,'

and, 'If government continues to interfere with business, we may as well throw in the towel.'

Mr Harts goes on to say:

"What is it about the pay equity law that evokes such emotional responses from small businesses? A lot of it has to do with the recession: Reduced sales, lower profit and a minimum of administrative staff leave small companies unable to afford the time and costs of undertaking the pay equity exercise. Lack of knowledge of what pay equity means and what it requires of an employer is another problem. The many publications provided free of charge by Ontario's Pay Equity Commission are often of limited value, and no wonder.

"Who but someone in the compensation field can make sense of language such as 'wage gap' or 'gender bias'? How about 'job-to-job comparisons' or 'gender-neutral comparison system'? And those are only a few of the buzzwords.

"Complicated? It sounds worse than it really is. An example of greater government interference in how you run your business? Probably."

What I find very interesting about this article, which was written by a partner in Peat Marwick Stevenson and Kellogg working in their compensation consulting group, when he talks about the difficulty with small business, is his conclusion.

"But as cumbersome and costly as pay equity may be, your daughters and their daughters will probably thank you some day, particularly if they end up working in female-dominated jobs."

So even where there's concern expressed, I think there are people, particularly people with daughters, who are very concerned about pay equity and who are actually very supportive of the principle.

But that being said, we have to look at this particular piece of legislation, Bill 102. I'd like to share with the members, because other than the parliamentary assistant, Ms Murdock, and Mrs Witmer, who's opposition critic for women's issues and critic for Labour for the Conservative Party, most members in the Legislature right now were not at the hearings, so they didn't hear all the things that were said. There were three areas, three problems with the legislation where people focused.

I'd like to, first of all, start by quoting from a summary of the hearings that was contained in an article in the *Toronto Star* dated February 1, 1993, by Kelly Toughill, and then go to what some of the presenters in the committee hearings actually said.

The *Toronto Star* article begins: "A parade of angry women trooped through a drab committee room in Queen's Park recently to lambaste Premier Bob Rae's government with the ever more familiar refrain: You've betrayed us, you've sold out.

"New Democrats listened for four days as long-time allies blasted Labour minister Bob Mackenzie's latest

plan to extend laws guaranteeing women equal pay for work of equal value.

"Mackenzie says his proposed legislation will extend pay equity to 420,000 more women.

"Critics say it will delay wage hikes for years, leave some women defenceless against discrimination and allow employers to backtrack on pay equity down the road.

"Under the new plan, they say, some of the lowest-paid women in Ontario won't see pay equity for decades while others will never see it at all....

"Even the president of the provincial New Democratic Party has taken aim at the bill. Testifying on behalf of the Ontario Federation of Labour before a government committee, Julie Davis urged her fellow socialists to change Mackenzie's proposal.

"Some see (the bill) as it now stands as a possible step back from your public commitment to the women of Ontario," she said.

"Others were less diplomatic.

"The Ontario Nurses' Association called the plan 'insulting and detestable,' 'shocking,' 'flawed' and 'fundamentally misdirected.'"

Then there was a summary that was quite good, I felt, in talking about the highlights of the new plan, Bill 102.

"Under the new plan:

"A 1995 deadline set by the Liberals for completing pay equity in publicly funded organizations is killed. Government agencies won't have to finish wage adjustments now until 1998, and both companies and government agencies can delay starting pay equity an extra year.

"Critics say the new law rewards employers for dragging their feet on the issue while penalizing those who did the plans on schedule.

"Employers who use the proxy method have no deadline to complete pay equity, only a requirement that they spend 1% of their payroll on correcting wage discrimination.

"The new law also exempts employers with fewer than 10 workers, arguing that pay equity is too heavy a burden for small business to bear. The exemption means some 230,000 women...have no legal recourse to equal pay."

Now, that was the article which sets the context. There are three areas where I'd like to tell you what presenters at the pay equity hearings said.

One is on the delay of achievement of pay equity in the public sector, and also the delay of extension of pay equity to the 420,000 women—women who were promised that this would happen much sooner. The second will be the limitations that this government will now allow on maintenance because it has weakened the provision in the original 1987 Liberal legislation which

insisted that once pay equity was achieved, the plan had to be maintained. The third was difficulties with the proxy system that the government has chosen.

1630

The first issue is the delay of achievement of pay equity, and I'd like to start by some quotes from the Ontario Nurses' Association:

"ONA is extremely disappointed that many of the government's proposed amendments will effectively erode any possibility of ever achieving pay equity for our members under this legislation.

"The government's shocking proposal to postpone for another three years, to 1998, the deadline to achieve pay equity in the public sector is clearly unacceptable.

"We will not support government initiatives that roll back progress made towards the elimination of gender-based wage discrimination.

"By moving in the direction of Bill 102, this government has blatantly reneged on its promise to right historic wrongs in women's wages. These amendments do not merely delay pay equity, they begin the dismantling of hard-fought gains....

"Public sector employers that we bargain with will be able to save three years of retroactive adjustments by finding a way around job-to-job comparisons and using proportional value effective January 1, 1993, instead of January 1, 1990."

And finally:

"Employers who should have, and could have, completed pay equity using job-to-job will now have a further monetary incentive to postpone and avoid job-to-job comparisons."

That was all by the Ontario Nurses' Association.

I'd like to quote now from the United Food and Commercial Workers, the UFCW, which is a union that acts on behalf of, obviously, the food industry workers:

"UFCW Canada urges the Ontario government to keep its original promise that pay adjustments in the public sector be paid in full by 1995."

The next quotes are from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, CUPE Ontario. This again is relating to the achievement of pay equity and the delay of Bill 102 and to achieving pay equity for public sector workers. CUPE said:

"However, while correcting this injustice, the bill also delivers major takeaways which were never part of the pay equity legislative agenda.

"We also urge your committee to support the deletion of those parts of the bill which take away existing pay equity rights and weaken what we currently have in place."

As far as the delay is concerned, this is what they had to say. This is again from CUPE:

"Section 7 of Bill 102 allows employers in the public

sector to take until 1998 to close the wage gap identified in its pay equity plans. This extension is being given as a legislative right and is not related to whether or not the employer can meet the original 1995 deadline.

"Completing pay equity increases is especially important to women who are close to retirement. Now, women who retire before 1995 lose pay equity increases coming into effect after they retire. Not only are they shortchanged by not having all of their pay equity increases, these increases will not be reflected in their pensions."

Finally from CUPE:

"It is distressing that the government chose to add this amendment without consultation with regard to its effect on retiring and laid-off women, and with such a free hand to employers who have not made the effort to complete pay equity adjustments as soon as possible."

The second thing that I'd like to quote to you from, from various presenters on Bill 102, were those who were very distressed about the limitations now placed on maintenance by the government. The government very cleverly inserted a little provision which weakens what was in the Pay Equity Act, 1987, brought in by the Liberals, because under that act, it was required that once pay equity was achieved, it would be maintained.

Now don't forget, there was already a provision in the act to deal with change of circumstances. We're not talking about that. We're talking about weakening the maintenance once pay equity is achieved, so I'd like to give you a few quotes from that.

The Ontario Nurses' Association had this to say about the limitations on maintenance:

"We find it insulting and detestable that the government is proposing that limitations might be prescribed for the current obligation to maintain pay equity."

This is what the United Food and Commercial Workers had to say about the maintenance issue:

"This addition is a step backwards. Section 7 of the current act makes pay equity a legislated requirement. Bill 102 gives the government of the day the right to set limitations through regulation, which is a step towards undermining legislated pay equity."

The Pay Equity Commission itself addressed this issue as far as limitations on maintenance are concerned. The Pay Equity Commission said:

"If this section of the bill is passed, the gains made by addressing pay inequity could be undone; in a few years' time, the Legislature may need to consider another pay equity act in order to recoup the lost ground that this section has the capacity to bring about.

"It is one thing to ask them"—the women the act benefits—"to stretch full achievement of their rights for a few years; it is quite another to ask them to give up a

portion or all of what they've gained in the exercise of their rights."

Another quote as far as the provision weakening the maintenance provision is concerned is from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, CUPE, the Ontario sector. I'll give you four quotes from CUPE:

"Section 2 of Bill 102 adds a section to the Pay Equity Act which represents a serious takeaway of pay equity rights which have been established under the current law.

"It is unfair and unjust for the government to now decide that it should have the right to delete its direct pay equity responsibilities. This represents a takeaway of existing rights."

They also said: "Bill 102 makes two references to putting limits on the maintenance of pay equity. This is a major takeaway of existing rights."

They say: "Section 6 of Bill 102 would allow cabinet to water down maintenance of pay equity," and it allows it to be retroactive. This again "is a major takeaway of rights."

The last set of quotes I wish to give members of the House that emanate from the pay equity hearings that were held in March relates to proxy and the use of the proxy method as chosen by the government. First of all, the Ontario Nurses' Association:

"We reject the government's amendments regarding proxy comparison methods.

"The proposed initiatives contravene the fundamental principle of comparing the compensation of female job classes to male job classes for pay equity purposes. Comparing female job classes to female job classes is unacceptable."

The United Food and Commercial Workers, UFCW, said about the proxy method:

"The proxy method must allow for the comparison of a female job class to the male proxy job class, and the adjustment should be the male job rate."

They've made a recommendation regarding section 21.15:

"The proposed amendment would allow a proxy organization to select a group of female job classes for comparison purposes. This process is highly subjective, unnecessarily complicated, and would require extensive work by the proxy organization, likely resulting in delays."

One of the other groups that went into the proxy method extensively was the Ontario Nursing Home Association, and they had a devastating message to pass on to members of the committee:

"The implementation of the proxy method of comparison without funding would result in the layoff of over 4,800 employees throughout the province and a reduction in patient care to a level which would place

residents at severe risk.

"Any wage increase not matched by a revenue increase will result in a direct reduction in the level of patient care provided by the home.

"These controls on both the revenue and service side of our operations do not allow us any flexibility in implementing programs like pay equity. We cannot adjust our revenue or change the services we provide to our residents to offset the financial impacts of pay equity.

"Nursing homes have been advised that they will receive no economic adjustment for January 1, 1993, irrespective of pending arbitration which will affect a significant number of our employees.

"If no funding is provided and pay equity goes forward as outlined in Bill 102, there will be a major reduction in the level of patient care provided by nursing homes.

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"Pay equity implementation must be fully funded by government to ensure that there is no reduction in the quality of care provided to residents. Proxy comparison, as defined in the current act, would put us out of business. Using this system, we would be forced to accept the salary policy outline of another organization which may be funded differently than nursing homes.

"If nursing homes are forced to use proxy comparisons, then we must be able to match percentage increase, not wage rates. Using proxy comparators with the job rate requirement would be devastating for the sector.

"The implementation of proxy comparisons, as outlined in the current act, would result in the following, if full funding of pay equity was not provided: First, the layoff of over 4,800 full-time staff members in our nursing home departments alone, and secondly, the reduction of nursing care to a level that would place nursing home residents at severe risk.

"If full funding was provided by the government and the act remained in its current form, the government would be required to add over \$410,000 for every 100-bed home"—that's for every 100-bed home. "Across the province, this would result in an expenditure of over \$123 million annually." That was the Ontario Nursing Home Association.

The final presenter I'd like to quote on proxy is one I haven't quoted in the other sections, because they made extensive comments about the proxy method and I'd like to stick to that particular topic.

The Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, which many of us know as OAITH, said:

"We wonder if the cost of achieving pay equity will prove to be greater than the results. Our ability to implement pay equity by the proxy method on a shelter-by-shelter basis will be severely constrained by our lack

of resources; indeed, may not be possible without an injection of funds for this purpose.

"We believe the recognition of this dedication, through the achievement of pay equity, is long overdue. However, we are uneasy about the reality of achieving pay equity by way of the amendments outlined in Bill 102."

They refer to the proxy method in Bill 102 as, and I'll quote, "a time-consuming, unwieldy method, with scarce resources."

And referring to Bill 102's provision that the proxy method will compare female jobs to female jobs, not male jobs, they said, "We see this limitation as a shocking departure from what we consider to be the essential nature of the original Pay Equity Act."

You can tell from the many presentations I've quoted from that there was severe concern expressed at the pay equity hearings about these three areas: delay, limitations on maintenance and proxy. In fact, the Liberal caucus produced extensive amendments regarding these three areas, and those amendments were rejected.

When you listen to the list of the people presenting—and there were far more than I quoted from here today who had very similar comments to make, but because of time I had to limit myself to picking a few of those who were particularly forceful about their views. The interesting thing is that they were coming from the Ontario Federation of Labour, they were coming from the Coalition for Better Child Care, they were coming from OAITH, the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, they were coming from the unions, they were coming from CUPE, they were coming from the food and commercial workers' union, they came from the Pay Equity Commission, they came from the Ontario Nursing Home Association and they came from the Ontario Nurses' Association.

Many of these groups have been traditional supporters of this government. They were not coming with a vested interest to discredit this government. They were not coming with a vested interest to attack this government for their own purposes. Many of them came as friends of this government who were very distressed with the legislation. They were exceedingly distressed about the delay, about the limitations on maintenance and about how the government finally chose to implement the proxy method.

As I said, we brought forward amendments, and yet, with the exception of a fairly minor amendment which I had raised concerning retribution by employers and to protect employees under the pay equity legislation, other than that one amendment, none of our amendments carried.

I find that the way the government has done this is very underhanded. What they've done is that they said, "We are going to extend pay equity to 420,000 women."

They said that and they got the political mileage for saying it; the Premier said it, the secretary of the party said it, over a year before the legislation actually went even into second reading. They said that, but when the people who work with the legislation looked at it, and when Bill 102 was introduced with its changes, what did they say? They said basically, "You've robbed Peter to pay Paul." Or, if we want to keep it in pay equity terms, maybe we'll say that they robbed Pierrette to pay Paula.

What this government has done is it's taken a right which women in this province already had—that was a right to achieve pay equity in the public service by January 1, 1995—and it's delayed that by three years, and it did that as a tradeoff for extending pay equity to an additional 420,000 women.

Many of those 420,000 women, particularly those concerned with and affected by the proxy method, were also very upset with the government because the government did not put a deadline on for the achievement of pay equity under the proxy comparison method. The broader public service, using the proxy method, doesn't have a deadline, so these women were saying, and even those who supported the proxy method were saying, "Without a deadline, it'll be years and decades before we achieve pay equity."

I think this government has played a giant shell game. On the one hand, they've taken away from the public sector so that they could make their announcement about the extension, but they've even taken away from those who were promised the extension of pay equity. So now they're not going to be seeing the realization of pay equity gains until 1995, and in the meantime what the government has done to pacify these women is say: "Well, we're going to give you a down payment on pay equity. We're going to give you something to make you feel like we're doing more than we are."

But women don't want to be pacified. They want equity and they want justice, and we don't believe that this legislation delivers equity or justice. We don't believe that the government has done an effective cost analysis which it can present to us. How can they talk about restraint on the one hand and yet not know how much the pay equity plan is going to cost or who's going to pay for it? I mean, that's the bottom line. With all the cuts and slashes, with the fact that retroactively the government is now saying to municipalities, "Well, yes, we did tell you that you were going to get transfer payments this year of a certain amount, but now you have to bite the bullet and we're going to pay you a lot less," there's a real fear out there in the broader public service that the government will not heed and will not stick to its word to pay for the pay equity, and quite frankly they're afraid they're going to lose their jobs.

To me, this pay equity legislation has pleased

nobody. The government's strongest supporters have come forward and been extremely critical, and I actually thought, when we were sitting in the hearings and we were hearing these stories, that the government would listen.

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Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): And you would do it better?

Ms Poole: We would do it better. First of all, Mr Mammoliti, I wish you had listened during the hearings, because certainly people did not agree with the way your government has handled this, and we would have done it differently. First, we would have done a cost analysis so people would know, and successive governments would know, what it was going to cost.

Mr Mammoliti: You were there for six years. What did you do? Did you make an attempt?

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Order.

Ms Poole: Mr Speaker, thank you for calling the member for Yorkview to order. He said, what did the Liberal government do in six years? What the Liberal government did was introduce the most progressive pay equity legislation—

The Acting Speaker: Order. I'd ask the honourable member to address the House. We're not getting into exchanges across the House. So the honourable member for Eglinton, if you could continue to debate.

Ms Poole: Yes. I certainly appreciate your comment, Mr Speaker. I was addressing many of my comments to you until a person from across the way decided that he would interject, which I believe is contrary to the standing rules as a matter of fact.

But, Mr Speaker, what I'd like to say to you is, what the Liberal government did was, in 1987 the Liberal government introduced the most progressive pay equity legislation in North America, the most progressive in the world.

Mr Mammoliti: You didn't do anything for five years.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Ms Poole: In fact, Mr Speaker, the Liberal government brought pay equity to 1.4 million women. The Liberal government also, in February 1990, announced that it was going to bring pay equity to a further 350,000 women by adopting the proportional method.

We kept our word; the Liberal government kept its word. Members of the government may forget this, but unlike the Conservatives, who stood up on second reading, which is a vote in principle, stood up and voted against pay equity, the Liberal caucus supported pay equity because we believe in the principle. What we are debating today is whether this legislation actually fulfils that principle, whether it brings pay equity to—

Mr Mammoliti: It's still better than yours. Much better than yours.

Ms Poole: Mr Speaker, I really do wish that the member for Yorkview would curtail his comments. It is contrary to the standing rules that he interjects and it is extremely distracting.

The Acting Speaker: I agree. The honourable member for Yorkview is interjecting, and that's strictly out of order. I would ask the honourable member to please forget the interjections and allow the honourable member for Eglinton to continue.

Ms Poole: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I appreciate your support in that because, quite frankly, I can say that this legislation is not better than the Liberal legislation. It erodes two very basic rights that women had under the Liberal legislation. One was that in the public service, women were going to achieve pay equity by January 1, 1995, and this legislation erodes that.

The second way in which this legislation erodes the Liberal legislation is by weakening the provision regarding maintenance. Surely members of this Legislature can see that once pay equity is achieved, it is imperative that it be maintained. Otherwise you can have an employer who accedes to the law, who says, "Yes, I've given the pay equity plan, I've posted the plan, I've implemented the plan," and then a year later says, "Yes, but I'm now arbitrarily going to change it."

So maintenance of the pay equity plans was very, very important. As I pointed out, many presenters to our committee said that the maintenance provisions would be weakened by this act.

Those are two ways in which this legislation is a step backward, and the number of times that the words "step back" and "erode" were used in committee was quite astounding, because despite what some members from the government will say, we do not view this legislation as a step forward. We support the principle, but we do not believe that the way you have chosen to do it will effectively bring pay equity to the women of this province.

The final comment I'd like to make has to do with cost, because surely in 1993 one of the things that we are talking about is what programs cost, how to deliver those programs cost-effectively and how to ensure that our social safety net is preserved.

Mr Mammoliti: Criticize, criticize, nothing but criticize.

Mr Frank Miclash (Kenora): Doesn't he have two minutes, Mr Speaker, to respond?

Ms Poole: Yes. Mr Speaker, I think the member for Kenora has quite rightly pointed out that the member for Yorkview will have an opportunity to speak in this Legislature. This debate has just begun. So while I understand his anxiety about speaking on pay equity, I do urge him to listen instead of criticising.

Mr Miclash: And learn something.

Ms Poole: And learn something.

Mr Miclash: Right. As a former school teacher, he should listen. He's got two minutes to respond later.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Ms Poole: As I was saying before some of the rabble got restless over there, it is very important that we look at costs, and either one of two things is true: Either the government does not know what the costs are, which means they haven't done their homework, or, secondly, they know what the costs are but they're not telling anybody because, first of all, some successive government is going to end up paying the tab and, secondly, they want to sneak this particular legislation through before people find out what it costs.

What the Liberal caucus had proposed as an alternative to the proxy method was a wage enhancement scheme, and there are some who do not believe that the wage enhancement scheme is a way to go because they say, "This is a justice issue, this is an equity issue and it should be through pay equity legislation."

But I reject that particular approach, because I think what's important is the bottom line. The bottom line is, I read out to the Legislature earlier, much earlier in fact, a list of those women who were going to benefit from pay equity legislation, and isn't the bottom line that we want to ensure that those women have reasonable wages? Those are the women who are among the 70% of women in Ontario who are paid less than \$30,000 a year, and we're talking full-time employment here. We aren't talking part-time statistics. Shouldn't that be our focus?

So the bottom line is, if you can achieve the same thing but you can achieve it with the government being able to control its expenditures, you can achieve it without the complexity and the bureaucracy engendered by the proxy method, if you can do it without that bureaucracy, then why do we say, "No, we won't do it by wage enhancement, it has to be proxy," a cumbersome method, and in fact the method chosen by this government has not been supported by women's groups.

Women's groups have said that, first of all, they don't like the language, and secondly, the proxy method chosen by the government, what they didn't like—and these are people who would have supported a proxy method, but they don't like the fact that they were female-to-female job comparisons. They said this went against the spirit of pay equity, which is that female jobs were to be compared with male jobs.

Mr Speaker, the parliamentary assistant is shaking her head, but I'll tell you, I quoted from the actual presenters who came forward and said they didn't like the way the government was going about the proxy method, and these were supporters of proxy as a concept but they felt that the plan wasn't what they wanted.

Then you have a whole range of people who don't believe that proxy is the answer, and I happen to be one of them. One of the reasons that our government said in 1990 that we would extend the proportional method of comparison was because we believed it could work. We believed it could work without going to compare with another establishment. It can certainly work without the great complexity that the proxy method engenders.

So what we have here is legislation that honestly there was not one group that came and said, "This is what we want," even friends of the government. They asked and they pleaded for amendments, and those amendments weren't forthcoming.

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I am a person who very much believes in pay equity. If the government had amended this legislation, if it had done as the groups asked, if it had done as our caucus asked, then I would have urged our caucus, notwithstanding the criticism from those who say that now is not the time for pay equity, to stand on third reading and support the legislation.

But it is not good legislation, and it is underhanded legislation, and it is a shell game. I can't see how members in this Legislature can stand and in good conscience support a piece of pay equity legislation which takes away existing rights. It's not a piece of legislation which says: "Well, we are in economic constraint right now. Therefore, we will phase in and we will extend pay equity to women who don't have it right now, but we'll phase it in." That's not what we're talking about. We're talking about areas in which it actually takes away existing rights. It's a step backward; it's an erosion of those rights.

It is not too late for this government to say that it will amend its legislation. It is not too late for this government to admit that it hadn't done its homework and it hadn't analysed the costs. It's not too late for them to come to this Legislature and say that they will change it.

So all I will say in conclusion is that I cannot support Bill 102. I think it is a betrayal of the women of this province. I think it is underhanded and that it takes away gains which we, as women, had been assured that we had in the 1987 legislation. I will not be supporting Bill 102 on third reading.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments. The honourable member for Hamilton West.

Hon Richard Allen (Minister without Portfolio in Economic Development and Trade): I've listened very carefully to the member for Eglinton and her remarks. I appreciated the fact that she certainly called attention to the fundamental issue this piece of legislation addresses, namely the inequity that exists in compensation for women, notwithstanding existing legislation, and the need to extend further equity

provisions in order to assure the women in a number of sectors untouched by existing legislation that they will in fact have pay of equal measure for work of equal value. That is the fundamental principle of this bill.

I certainly remember well when we initiated this whole debate back in 1985, when we entered into the contract with the Liberal government to move in the direction of pay equity, but I also remember, and we appreciated the fact, that the government of that time accepted that proposition. But I remember the battle that we had to move the then Liberal government from an application of pay equity purely and simply in the public sector and to get them to move it into the private sector. There was a great reluctance to incorporate a whole range of women's employment into pay equity in the first instance. So the speaker, from time to time in her remarks, has perhaps moved a little bit too grandly in appropriating all of that territory for her own government at that time.

I would just say, because it would take me 90 minutes to respond to a 90-minute address in all of its particulars, for example, I think the member is confusing wage enhancement with a proper solution to the proxy issue. The wage enhancement matter is pretty much met by our down payment approach to the issue. She's certainly mistaken in saying that child care workers don't start pay equity until 1995; I think I noted correctly. That is incorrect. The latest they will start is January 1, 1994, with proxy, and it is true that there will be no deadline on proxy. It is a complicated application, and it will be in place as time passes.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member's time has elapsed. Further questions and/or comments?

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): I just rise to commend the member for Eglinton on a fine presentation on a very, very difficult issue. She has canvassed succinctly the variety of opinions that came before the committee. In my experience with the member for Eglinton, she always does her homework. I think anyone who has spent the 90 minutes listening to Ms Poole's characterization of the bill would know that this is a member that has done an excellent job in looking out for the interests of the people of Ontario.

I would suggest, though, that as we look at this issue, which is essentially a compensation issue, we have to look at it in the relevance of our times, in the relevance of a social contract that is being discussed. I want to talk about what that social contract is likely to do; I know it's doing it in my riding right this moment.

We are having the effect that many women are losing their jobs. It doesn't have anything to do with this bill, but this government is laying off more women than any government ever could consider. So in the context of our times, when we're talking about fair methods of compensation, we also have to consider that this government has chosen, as a matter of course, to put women

out of work, and I find that very, very distressing.

I also want to just quickly bring to the attention of the House again the fact that this government has chosen, in my constituency, to close down a school for RNAs, the majority of whom are women. They will not be able to get a job in a community where unemployment is at 60% or 70%, and this government has refused to retrain them.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member. Further questions and/or comments.

Mrs Irene Mathyssen (Middlesex): I would like to say that I listened carefully, as others in the House did, and I found the presentation by the member for Eglinton rather confusing. On the one hand she was talking about the private sector having great difficulty in meeting our pay equity requirements, and then on the other hand she condemned the government for not moving aggressively enough. It's one thing or the other. I'm really confused by it being both at the same time.

Another thing I'd like to mention is that in 1987 the then Liberal government did indeed bring in legislation, but that legislation only talked about job-to-job comparisons, and it simply did not reach enough of the women in our society who are very often among the lowest paid. That kind of comparison didn't work for them. So when we became the government, we launched into extensive consultation processes in order to bring in more women. That's why we introduced the proportional value methodology, which brought in 340,000 additional women, and then the proxy method, which brought in an additional 80,000 women, for a total of 420,000 more women benefiting from pay equity.

The member opposite is also in significant error regarding what has been requested by women's groups and coalitions. They wanted legislation and a method with rights to achieve equal pay. The Equal Pay Coalition specifically asked for clear comparisons with female jobs classes that had already been compared to male job rates, so that there wouldn't be this onerous and cumbersome process of going outside and finding more data. Thank you, Mr Speaker; I appreciated this opportunity.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments.

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Eglinton. I think she has raised very well many of the concerns that were raised during the presentations to the committee concerning this particular bill.

However, I would take exception to one fact. She pointed out the fact that the PC Party did not support, on second reading, this bill. It was because, although we support in principle pay equity, we were already very aware of many of the concerns that people in this province had concerning pay equity, particularly the

proxy issue, and I would just like to correct that for the record. We do support the principle.

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The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Eglinton has two minutes to respond.

Ms Poole: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the four members for their comments.

I'll start with the member for Hamilton West, who said that in fact I was in error when I said that the payments for pay equity for the proxy sector would not start being paid out till 1995. I was quoting from the Coalition for Better Child Care. It was the Coalition for Better Child Care that said this to me. They said it in public. They said that child care workers would not see the benefits of pay equity from Bill 102 till 1995. If the minister thinks he knows better than the coalition for better child care, that's fine, but that was its comment.

I would like to thank the member for Algoma-Manitoulin, although I think some might debate his words that I succinctly canvassed opinions on the committee, after a 90-minute speech, but I do thank him for his words.

The member for Middlesex admitted to being very confused, but I think the Liberal stand is extremely easy to comprehend. First of all, we do not like the fact that rights that were given under the Pay Equity Act, 1987, are eroded. Second, we do not support the proxy method but instead would support a series of wage enhancements. Third, when she says that women's groups were not critical of the proxy method, I would suggest she go back to Hansard and look, because they were very critical of the way in which this government went about the proxy method.

As for the member for Waterloo North, I am glad to hear that the Conservatives do support pay equity. I do not believe that's what I heard her leader say. It was certainly not what their speeches indicated on second reading, but I'm glad to hear that they do support pay equity.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member for her participation in the debate. Further debate?

Mrs Witmer: I am pleased to participate today in the discussion regarding third reading of Bill 102, the Pay Equity Amendment Act, 1992.

Today we are dealing with the subject of the wage gap as we debate this bill and attempt to discuss the issue of reimbursing women with equal pay for work of equal value. I would just like to indicate again that the PC Party does support the principle of pay equity, but we have had some various, serious concerns about this legislation and we really do question whether indeed this bill does support that principle. I will make further comments regarding that in the future.

We have here before us, then, this Bill 102, which replaced Bill 168, which received first reading on

December 18, 1991. The new bill, Bill 102, introduces all the same amendments as the previous bill, with a few additions and a few changes.

We now hear that because of the fiscal situation in the province, the province has decided that the deadline for achieving pay equity in the public sector has been moved from 1995 to 1998. We also learn in this bill that pay equity plans may be reopened to extend payouts over the new time frame. In addition, the effective date for proportional value adjustments was delayed one year, until January 1, 1993, and the proxy approach was delayed one year, until January 1, 1994.

Like the previous Bill 168, the amendments in Bill 102 will expand pay equity to cover an additional 420,000 Ontario women, again because of adding two new methods of comparison: the proportional value for employees in the public and private sectors and the proxy comparison for employees in the public sector only. That seems to be the method of comparison that has created a tremendous amount of concern for women throughout this province. We've certainly heard from the member for Eglinton about the many groups that have expressed that concern. I will be referring to some of those concerns myself later.

The one difference in this Bill 168 is the fact that the new bill explains the proxy comparison method in greater detail than it did in Bill 168.

However, I'd like to just now take a look at the debate over pay equity and the time and the costs, because there's certainly been some misleading information released by the government throughout the debate. I'd like to go back just to 1990.

In 1990, of course, we had our election campaign and all of us in this House, except for two, were involved in that. During the 1990 provincial election campaign, the NDP released its document entitled *An Agenda for People*, and we've often made reference to that *Agenda for People*, and the fact that so many parts of that document have been totally disregarded by the NDP government once it assumed office and decided to put that aside. We've discovered that the promises they made to people in this province have certainly not been followed through upon.

Anyway, within that document was a section dealing with pay equity and it said that the bill passed in 1987 excluded "hundreds of thousands of women." Of course, some of the people who were excluded, as we know, were the garment workers, and these are primarily individuals who work in the industry in the city of Toronto, and another large group that was excluded was the child care workers. Of course, these two groups are among the lowest-paid workers in this province today; they were in the past and they continue to be.

The NDP promised in the *Agenda for People* in 1990 that if elected it would pass legislation that covered all

women. Now they say that the cost of eliminating the current exemptions is going to be \$60 million.

They also said that the pay equity adjustments could be made without any cuts in services or an added burden on the local taxpayer. We have certainly learned that was erroneous information because there has been a very significant impact. There have been cuts in the services that are provided to people in our communities, and there has been an added burden placed on the local taxpayer throughout the province. I know that from my own community because many of the pay equity costs that have been introduced, whether it be at the school board level or at the municipal level, have been passed on to the local taxpayer.

Unfortunately, because of cuts in services, women who might have benefited from pay equity have instead lost their jobs, so there's no net gain whatsoever. It's unfortunate that since 1990 this government has not focused more of a priority upon job creation; not the government creating jobs but it should be creating an environment for job creation within this province, because we all know that it's the private sector and the small-business person who are going to create the jobs, and we just have not seen that happening at all.

Although we might see some gains being made within the pay equity sector, we've seen so many cutbacks and so much downloading to the municipalities and the universities and the school boards and the hospitals that, as a result, we've seen jobs cut, and unfortunately it's often women who are losing these jobs. The government is doing what it accused the federal government of doing. They've downloaded, and as a result, they've certainly contributed to the loss of jobs and particularly the loss of jobs for women.

As well this week, we learned that as the government grapples with reducing billions from its ballooning deficit, the hospitals have asked the province for more than \$160 million to fund pay equity programs and other costs. The hospitals indicated this week that they need \$53 million for retroactive payments to workers under pay equity, pay equity which is going to provide equal pay for work of equal value and augment the wages of jobs traditionally held by women.

They're going to need additional money, another \$105 million, for the implementation of health and safety regulations. It's obvious they don't have the money. It's obvious that if they don't receive the money, there are going to be some further cuts within the hospital sector, and again, it's often the people who are earning the least whose jobs are eliminated. So certainly we've seen some losses for women in this province.

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I think the government also has to be very careful about promoting its pay equity bill, because it has backed down and the time line for implementation has

been changed. As well, they have refused to recognize pay equity in the child care field. They were willing to recognize the need for pay equity within the non-profit sector, but there was absolutely no consideration for the child care worker who worked in the commercial centres.

At the same time, when I talk about equity and the need to promote women, the need for fairness, the need for equality to support women, we have a government which at the present time is doing everything possible to drive the private sector out of providing commercial day care. I want the government to know that it's primarily women who are the small business entrepreneurs who are losing their business. They are losing their livelihood, they are being driven out of business. I think the government needs to recognize that there's certainly no equity as they drive these women totally out of business in an attempt to put child care into the hands of the non-profit sector.

Let's go back now to the cost of pay equity. As I indicated before, during the 1990 provincial election campaign, the Agenda for People said the cost of eliminating current exemptions was probably going to be about \$60 million. We know how very wrong that total was. Early in the week of October 15, 1990, the Pay Equity Commissioner said that the new government's election campaign promise to extend pay equity to all women would cost at least three times the \$60 million that the NDP had estimated it would. It was reported that the former Liberal government had estimated that it would cost \$90 million to \$100 million for pay equity raises for day care workers and nursing home assistants alone.

In response to the above statement, the Premier said the government would go ahead with its plans for pay equity and that it had five years to meet its goal. We know that this is not happening: They are not proceeding; they have moved the goal to eight years instead of five years. We also know now that in the 1991 budget, the government announced that it would be contributing \$1 billion annually towards pay equity adjustments in the broader public sector when pay equity is fully implemented. How far we have come from the original \$60 million, which was touted as the cost in the Agenda for People, to a cost now of \$1 billion annually when fully implemented.

Let's take a look at the two new methods that have been introduced in the area of comparison. First is the proportional value comparison. It's estimated that approximately 340,000 women are going to benefit. Proportional value is a way of indirectly comparing the female and the male job classes in the same organization. It looks at the relationship between the value of the work performed and the compensation received by the male job classes, and it applies the same principles and practices to compensating female job

classes. There are several ways to make proportional value comparisons, and the wage line is the most common. All of the methods allow comparison, even when there are only a few male job classes.

The act is going to require that all female job classes in an establishment be compared with male job classes in the same establishment, using the present job-to-job comparison, the new proportional value approach or a combination of the two. There is a provision that existing pay equity plans which have been negotiated or developed, posted, and deemed approved under the act will not need to be reopened except to identify pay equity adjustments for any female job class for which no male comparator could be found using the job-to-job method.

There is very little concern, I should add, regarding the proportional value comparison, but let's take a look at the proxy comparison. There are fewer women who will benefit from this type of comparison; it's estimated that about 80,000 women will. While proportional value is a generally accepted compensation practice, proxy comparison is a new approach.

Where comparisons cannot be made in the public sector using job-to-job or proportional value comparison methods, proxy comparison can be used, and proxy comparison is going to allow an organization to find male comparators for its female jobs in outside organizations. Only organizations that are in the broader public sector will be able to use the proxy approach, and this is going to include the female-dominated sectors such as home care, nursing homes, corrections, child care and other female-dominated sectors, and these are the sectors which are expressing their concern about the proxy comparison method.

Under proxy comparison, one public sector organization, the seeking organization, borrows job content and adjustment information from another public sector organization, the proxy organization, where similar work is performed in order to determine the appropriate pay equity adjustments for its female job classes. The female job classes in the seeking organization will receive pay equity adjustments to the comparable male job rates in the proxy organization.

I'm going to explain a little later about some of the concerns that the public sector has concerning the proxy comparison and the impact it's going to have on its ability to provide services and to continue to operate in the manner in which it presently is able to do, given the very, very difficult economic situation that we find ourselves in in this province.

In addition, this bill, this Bill 102, is going to do a few other things. The circumstances in which the crown is considered to be the employer of an individual for purposes of the act: That provision is made effective December 18, 1991. It will also provide that when an employer sells the business, the purchaser assumes the

employer's obligations under the act. It will also provide a mechanism for amending a pay equity plan at an establishment when circumstances change. It will enable review officers to issue compliance orders for failure to comply with the act. It will require employers in the private sector who employ more than nine and less than 100 employees or any employer who is directed to do so by the pay equity office to post in the employer's workplace a notice which sets out (1) the employer's obligation to establish and maintain compensation practices that provide for pay equity and (2) the manner in which an employee may file a complaint or objection under the act. Finally, the bill will also provide that the administrative and procedural changes are made to the powers of the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal. The amendments will confirm the practice of holding pre-hearing conferences before the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal to encourage settlements.

1730

Ms Poole: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): On a point of order—the honourable member for Eglinton is not in her seat.

Ms Poole: The member for Waterloo North is giving a very comprehensive speech and there doesn't seem to be a quorum here to hear it. I think members of the House should be here to hear this speech.

The Acting Speaker: I want to remind the honourable member that she should be in her seat when she calls for a point of order.

Ms Poole: Mr Speaker, I am. This is my new seat.

The Acting Speaker: The Speaker apologizes. You have moved well up in the world.

Is there a quorum? A quorum is not present. Please call in the members.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum is now present. The honourable member for Waterloo North can resume her participation in the debate.

Mrs Witmer: I had been reviewing the content of the legislation, Bill 102, the Pay Equity Amendment Act, which had replaced Bill 168, and I was mentioning the fact that this bill introduces all the same amendments as the previous bill and that there are a few changes and a few additions. I had reviewed the proportional value comparison and the proxy comparison, the additions that I talk about in this bill that are going to be provided, and the last change I want to mention is the fact that the administrative and procedural changes are made to the powers of the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal.

The amendments will confirm the practice of holding pre-hearing conferences before the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal to encourage settlements. The tribunal is also going to be able to enforce a written settlement that the

parties have negotiated.

That then summarizes the content of Bill 102, and I'd like to now deal with the bill, some of the concerns that our party has regarding this legislation and certainly some of the concerns that have been expressed by people who made presentations, people who have written letters, because certainly not all of the people who had concerns about this legislation did have an opportunity to appear before the committee, for different reasons.

We're very concerned about the double standard that has been created. The double standard, of course, is the different time line for the private sector as opposed to the public sector. As a result, the PC caucus introduced an amendment for the small business community, wanting within the amendment to push back the first pay equity adjustment date for companies with 99 or fewer employees to the 1st day of January 1998. Currently, it is January 1, 1993.

In introducing this amendment, our caucus wanted to correct the double standard, since the bill extends the time lines for the government and its payment schedule in the area of pay equity but it doesn't take into consideration that the same economic hardships that have been created for the government have also been created for the business sector in this province, particularly the small business sector, which is struggling to keep on its feet and out of bankruptcy.

Unfortunately, our amendment to help the small business community and push back the first pay equity adjustment date for companies with 99 or fewer employees to the 1st day of January 1998, which currently is January 1, 1993, was defeated, and it was unfortunate, but the Liberals voted with the NDP against our amendment.

We're certainly concerned that the government continues to place demands on the private sector, demands that it refuses to place upon itself. It doesn't realize that certainly in doing what it's done there is a double standard.

We all know that the economic situation in this province has created a tremendous amount of hardship, hardship for people no matter whether they're in the country or they're in the city, whether they're non-profit or they're a member of the private sector. We know that bankruptcies continue to be much too common, and as a result we still continue to learn about workers who are losing their jobs.

Unfortunately, pay equity legislation has added another cost of doing business in this province, and unfortunately for some people it is the final blow, it is something they simply can't afford. They don't have the expertise, they don't have the dollars to hire the consultants, and it's just the final straw. The government recognized that it had to postpone the pay equity

payments but it certainly didn't give that same consideration for the people who create the jobs in this province. So there is a double standard.

Also, one of our members, the member for Wellington, tabled a motion to get additional information on the costs associated with the implementation of pay equity because certainly the numbers have been in dispute. The motion, unfortunately, was defeated and again the NDP and the Liberals voted against our motion.

Certainly, the member for Wellington asked some very good questions, questions to which I believe the public is entitled to know the answers, and the questions were as follows:

"Would the Minister of Labour provide the committee members with the following information: The annual pay equity adjustment cost for the Ontario public service for the years 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993; the projected annual pay equity adjustment cost for the Ontario public service for the years 1994 to 1998?"

He also asked for the company name and total amount paid for any consulting services that the government acquired to assist with the development of pay equity plans for the Ontario public service.

Furthermore, he looked for the annual pay equity adjustment costs for the broader public sector, with a breakdown for school boards, for hospitals, for municipalities and for colleges and universities for the years 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993.

Certainly, having been the chairperson of a board of education that was involved in providing pay equity adjustment costs for the employees, I can tell you that those costs are quite substantial and it's certainly something that we need to get a handle on.

He asked for the exact dollar amount transferred from the government to school boards, hospitals, municipalities and colleges and universities to assist the broader public sector with pay equity adjustments.

He asked for the projected annual pay equity adjustment costs for the broader public sector with a breakdown for school boards, hospitals, municipalities and colleges and universities for the years 1994 to 1998; the estimated pay equity adjustment costs for private sector employers with 500 or more employees for 1991, 1992 and 1993; and, finally, the eighth question that was asked concerning the costs associated with the implementation of pay equity was the estimated pay equity adjustment costs for private sector employers with 100 to 499 employees for 1992 and 1993.

1740

Well, this is the answer that the member for Wellington received: Elaine Campbell, the research officer for the legislative research service, indicated that Ms Sulzenko is unaware of any actual total of the costs incurred in either the private or the public sectors. Totally unbelievable. In response to those eight ques-

tions associated with the costs in the implementation of pay equity, the government has absolutely no idea, nor does it seem interested in determining what the cost has been or what the cost will be. I find this totally irresponsible, that the government would not have any knowledge of the costs incurred so far with the implementation of pay equity, and it's certainly something that we would hope the government would continue to pursue, although the information doesn't appear to be available at the present time.

This bill also does not increase the current obligation of a private sector employer to devote at least 1% of the previous year's payroll to pay equity adjustment. There appears that there's no legislated completion date for achieving pay equity in the private sector. This certainly does create some uncertainty and a feeling of unease among those people who would be impacted.

We know that this new bill is going to allow the government three more years to achieve pay equity. It's not going to be achieved within the five years that the Premier promised in 1990. All of the existing requirements to implement the pay equity plans in the public sector by 1995, as outlined in the Pay Equity Act 1987, are extended to 1998. We're certainly aware of the fact that this broken promise by the Premier to extend the bill for three more years, from 1995 to 1998, has certainly created concern for the women in this province in the areas where they receive very low wages, wages in the figure of \$15,000 to \$25,000, and they certainly do believe strongly that the government has broken its commitment to women in this province in their attempts to achieve pay equity.

Let's get back to the cost. I've indicated to you that the government is unwilling or unable to provide any costs associated with the implementation of pay equity. I also mentioned previously that the 1991 budget announced that the government is going to contribute \$1 billion annually towards pay equity adjustments in the broader public sector when it is fully implemented. Obviously, that was a figure that was put forward by this present government—1991.

When the government talks about the \$1 billion that it's going to need to contribute annually towards pay equity adjustments, that \$1 billion includes the following. There was going to be \$120 million in annualized funding, starting in 1990 and 1991, that was spent on job-to-job comparison. There's \$175 million which still remains to be spent on job-to-job comparison. There is \$400 million that's going to be spent on proportional value at maturity and there's going to be \$285 million that's going to be spent on proxy comparison at maturity. That then is how the government has added up the numbers, to reach a total of \$1 billion, which is going to be necessary for it to contribute annually towards pay equity adjustments in the broader public sector when it is fully implemented.

Let's now take a look at the cost of Bill 102, Bill 102 being the pay equity bill that we're presently dealing with.

It has been anticipated it's going to cost \$685 million. Included in the 1992 budget was a commitment to spend \$285 million in 1992 and 1993 to implement pay equity in the broader public sector. Since Bill 102 postpones the introduction of the two methods of job comparison, the government has now revised that estimate to \$240 million from \$285 million.

As we know, this past year, in the spring on March 18, 1993, the Minister of Labour announced that he was going to be giving \$50 million as a down payment to the women in the lowest-paid jobs in the broader public sector. He was going to give approximately 40,000 women up to \$2,500 apiece.

This was done because when the government had indicated last fall that it was delaying pay equity to the more than 480,000 women who worked in the government-funded agencies and had primarily female staff, there had been tremendous concern and critics had complained long and hard that the government was fighting the recession on the backs of the women working in the vital services and really the women who were most in need.

Mr Mackenzie, the Labour minister, has promised to spend \$50 million in a form of down payment, and the women who are going to be receiving that money are going to be women in 10 types of agencies. They are the women in women's shelters, in home support for seniors, homemaking programs, community health programs, drug treatment programs, public libraries, community information centres, corrections programs, immigrant services and native friendship centres. These are the women who typically earn between \$15,000 to \$25,000 a year, and it's only the women who work full-time who are going to get the full \$2,500 raise; the part-time workers are going to get a fraction of that amount, depending on how many hours they put in.

But I have to tell you, you have to question the minister's priorities in making that announcement on March 18, because we now have the government entering into social contract talks in an attempt to pare down the broad public sector payroll. Although some of these women I have just mentioned may indeed receive \$2,500 more per year, or less if they're part-time workers, many of the people, because of the social contract talks, because of the downloading on the municipalities, the universities, the hospitals and the school boards who might have benefited from pay equity, will find themselves without a job. That's the impact of this government's actions and certainly they, in the long term, are not going to benefit the women at the low end of the scale.

I'd like to go back to the discussion regarding the double standard, because that's an issue that certainly is

of tremendous concern for us. As I indicated before, this bill doesn't affect the time line for the private sector implementation of pay equity, and private sector companies are required to begin making pay equity adjustments according to the following schedule: If your company was 500 or more, you had to make your first pay equity adjustment on January 1, 1991; if you had a company with 100 to 499 employees, you made your first payment January 1, 1992; if you had 50 to 99 employees, you made your first payment January 1, 1993, and if you have 10 to 49 employees, you will make your first payment January 1, 1994.

1750

Again I remind the government, you have postponed the implementation of pay equity for the public sector because of the recession and the economic factors. You should also remember that the business community, industry, everyone in this province has been devastated by the recession. In fact they've been hard hit as well by your government as you continue to increase taxes, and we have the promise of \$2 billion more when the budget is released next week. Even so, you have not made any changes to the pay equity obligations for the private sector. So indeed there certainly is a double standard.

The expenditure control plan which this government released on April 23, 1993, indicated that the extension of the time frame for the implementation of pay equity was going to save the government \$340 million in fiscal 1993 and 1994. The proportional value amendments will require employers to reopen their plans. Hence, you're going to do even more damage to the private sector because you're going to be increasing their costs this year, 1993. You've totally ignored the impact of the recession for the private sector.

Bill 169 introduces amendments to ensure that the government can keep control of its payroll costs by preventing a tribunal or court from finding that employees are public or crown employees unless they have been expressly appointed by the crown, yet Bill 102 is going to expand private sector payroll costs.

Your 1991 budget stated that the government will contribute \$1 billion annually towards pay equity adjustments in the broader public sector when it is fully implemented. The NDP cannot currently afford this program—it's obvious—but the assumption it is making is that the next government—and it becomes apparent that there will be a change in the next election—will have the resources to implement the changes.

The government began making pay equity adjustments for government employees in 1990 and yet today the women who are among the lowest paid in the labour force, the women in the day care centres who look after the children in this province, the women who work in the youth hostels, in the mental health centres and the battered women's shelters are going to have their initial

pay equity adjustments moved forward another year. Yes, we certainly do have within this government a double standard.

I'd like to now draw the attention of the Speaker to the reaction that we've had in the committee and in the form of letters and verbal communications regarding Bill 102. There has been a tremendous amount of concern expressed.

The first letter that I would like to read is from the YWCA of Kitchener-Waterloo. This was dated February 15, 1993. It was addressed to the Honourable Bob Mackenzie, Minister of Labour, re the pay equity amendment bill.

"The Kitchener-Waterloo YWCA read with interest about the new bill which you introduced to amend the Pay Equity Act of 1987. As a member of one of the oldest and largest women's organizations in Canada, and indeed in the world, full recognition of women's contributions to society has been one of our major issues for advocacy and change.

"Pay equity for work of equal value is an important vehicle to bring about the larger goal of equality in law, education, economy and the sociopolitical leadership. This very laudable goal has unfortunately"—and this I would ask the government to listen to—"led to conditions in the charitable service sector which work against the very same women it was designed to help. Already struggling hard to deal with the economic recession and government cutbacks, the additional financial burden of pay equity proves to be too heavy to bear for many service agencies, resulting in layoffs and service cuts." I referred to those layoffs and those service cuts before.

"In our case, the cost of pay equity and other employment-related legislation is creating an unacceptably high deficit which is threatening safe and secure emergency housing to the most vulnerable women and children, at a time when the need and the demand for service is higher than ever."

I can assure the Speaker that the YWCA of Kitchener-Waterloo does an outstanding job of providing a very safe and secure environment for the most vulnerable in our community, the women and the children who need emergency housing. I can assure the Speaker that the need and the demand for that service, as a result of the economic recession, is higher than ever before. Yet they are struggling, and one of the factors that is providing an additional financial burden for the YWCA is the cost of pay equity and the fact that it's going to result in layoffs and service cuts.

The writer goes on to say, "For these reasons, we strongly support your government's proposal to extend the implementation period of pay equity to 1998," in order that they don't have to reduce their service, in order that they don't have to lay off staff.

Now, the final paragraph says:

"Before implementing pay equity by proxy comparison, we also urge you to examine the effect of pay equity upon the internal equity within a place of employment. For example, by adjusting one or more female-dominated positions to a male-dominated comparator position that may be compensated at an inflated wage or salary, the equity among many or all positions may be disturbed significantly, thus bringing about conditions which are contrary to the intention of the act."

It was brought to our attention by the member for Eglinton that other sectors have very similar concerns about proxy comparison. The nurses have a concern. The Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses: "There's a concern that the cost might be greater than the benefit and that if you bring about these conditions it could be contrary to the intention of the act."

This is a letter that I received from the YWCA of Kitchener-Waterloo, a letter that was sent to the Minister of Labour, a letter that was sent to my colleague the

Honourable Marion Boyd, minister responsible for women's issues, and also to some other of my colleagues here in this House. Certainly they have expressed very well the concerns that have been expressed by hundreds of people throughout this province about the implementation of pay equity: the fact that it can lead to layoffs, it can lead to service cuts and indeed the very people we're trying to help are the ones that are going to be laid off and suffer from the service cuts.

The next interest group reaction that I would like to deal with at this time is from the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and obviously they have some concerns which, although not similar to the YWCA of Kitchener-Waterloo, are extremely important and need to be expressed.

The Acting Speaker: It now being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning, Thursday, May 13, at 10 o'clock in the morning.

The House adjourned at 1800.

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No. 19



N° 19

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 13 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 13 mai 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

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Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

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Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Thursday 13 May 1993

The House met at 1002.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS
SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM

Mr Huget moved private member's notice of motion number 6:

That, in the opinion of this House,

(1) Recognizing that currently two pieces of legislation govern the delivery of social assistance in the province: the General Welfare Assistance Act and the Family Benefits Act; and

(2) Recognizing that different legislative and regulatory requirements and different policies and guidelines have been established under each of these statutes to regulate the delivery of social assistance in the province; and

(3) Recognizing that in the existing administrative frameworks established under each of these statutes, social assistance is delivered by different levels of government; and

(4) Recognizing that the existing legislative and administrative frameworks are complex and cumbersome, and cause confusion and duplication; and

(5) Recognizing that the Advisory Group on New Social Assistance Legislation recommends in its May 1992 report entitled *Time for Action* that social assistance in Ontario be delivered by only one level of government and be governed by only one piece of legislation;

The government of Ontario should consider replacing the General Welfare Assistance Act and the Family Benefits Act with one new piece of legislation governing the delivery of social assistance in the province; the new legislation should have a preamble and a purpose clause that would state the underlying values of the administrative system and the fundamental objectives of social assistance; and

The government of Ontario should consider replacing the existing administrative frameworks with a new, unified single-tier administrative system where social assistance would be delivered by only one level of government; and

In keeping with the May 1992 first nations' project team report entitled *Principal Report on New Social Assistance Legislation for First Nations in Ontario*, any negotiations between the government of Ontario and the first nations on the administration and delivery of social assistance should be done in recognition of the Statement of Political Relationship signed on August 6, 1991, by the government of Ontario and first nations representatives.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville):

Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the honourable member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): This issue is one that is of great importance to me and has been for quite some time. I have to say I was disappointed when my original time last December to present this resolution was pre-empted, but I'm pleased today to have the opportunity to seek the support of the House on this very important matter.

I'm sure many of the members in this House can identify with the frustration that comes out of the case work in their offices attempting to deal with our social assistance programs. There have been so many people in my constituency office who have been put into a state of confusion trying to deal with the bureaucratic maze of two systems.

Constituents visiting my office usually have a multitude of questions in trying to determine how they can achieve assistance in Ontario: What type of help do they need? Is it short-term or long-term? Under which act, family benefits or general welfare? Are you a single parent or a single person? Are you temporarily or permanently disabled? Are you a new entrant to the system? What office should you go to, the municipality's or the province's?

When people find themselves with no money and in a desperate situation, these questions add to their frustration at a time when the last thing people need is more frustration.

The purpose of social assistance is to help those in our society who find they're economically unable to meet their basic needs. For some who apply for assistance, it can be traumatic enough to have to ask for help in the first place. Add to this tension the fact that the administrative frameworks are complex and in themselves cause confusion and you are now looking at the nightmare faced by some applicants.

Historically, social assistance has been a municipal responsibility in Canada, but that has changed over time. Ontario, Manitoba and Nova Scotia are now the only provinces that currently have a municipal welfare system. The rest of the provinces have already moved to making it a provincial responsibility.

Currently, our province's two social assistance programs are family benefits and general welfare assistance. Family benefits provides longer-term assistance to single parents, permanently disabled persons and some seniors. That program is delivered by the province. General welfare is delivered by municipalities and is considered to be short-term assistance for single people, families headed by a couple and new entrants to

the system. The benefits differ under both the General Welfare Assistance Act and the Family Benefits Act.

But why should one act cover single parents and another act cover married couples, and why should there be a different delivery agent for those acts? In my opinion, new legislation covering all recipients is a change that makes sense to me. There would in fact be no losers if these changes were made.

As taxpayers, we will benefit from a one-tier system that will lead to less duplication of services, less fraud and less overpayment. For those who apply for and receive benefits, new legislation will create an easier, more understandable and fairer system. For those on the front line who administer benefits, a streamlined service would obviously have a positive impact on their day-to-day activities.

The call for a one-tier system has come from many sources. In *Transitions*, a report of the Social Assistance Review Committee, one of its recommendations was that the FBA and GWA be unified into one piece of legislation. Delivery staff, municipalities and labour have all called for the province to make a decision regarding the future delivery agent of social assistance. All three have also called for a one-tier delivery service with one delivery agent per community.

1010

The most recent report, *Time for Action*, in May 1992, presented 52 recommendations to create a fairer, easier system for social assistance delivery. Recommendation number one calls for new legislation and one delivery agent, and I would have to agree that it is indeed a time for action.

One of the reasons our current systems are ineffective is their lack of statements of purpose or values. Delivery agents need a better clarification of their role and clients deserve to know what rights they have within the system. The lack of a purpose clause has also been criticized for contributing to the lack of consistent delivery service across Ontario.

Depending on how a particular office or workers see their role in the system, there continues to be considerable differences in the approach providing services. For example, some offices may volunteer information about a program while others may give information only if they're asked. The need for a purpose clause and a common set of values is clear.

Time for Action has recommended that extensive powers be given to the province to ensure that social assistance is administered according to the provisions of a new act and its principles. These powers of the province would guarantee that the system operates fairly and consistently everywhere in the province.

An example of the need for fairness is the area of special needs. Right now, people in many areas of the province do not have full access to assistance for special

needs. Some municipalities fund special needs; others don't. Some will only provide part of the money for a necessary item and others provide it all. Special needs are considered to be at the option of the delivery agent. A revised system should ensure equal treatment of social assistance recipients no matter where they live.

I have noted in my resolution that these changes shall not pertain to the first nations communities. When Ontario and first nations representatives signed the Statement of Political Relationship in 1991, we recognized the inherent right of first nations to be self-governing within the framework of the Canadian Constitution.

Because aboriginal cultures are rich and complex, there are many cultural, social and political aspects unique to them that our current systems have not been able to adequately address and have in many ways been at odds with the basic values of first nations cultures. First nations themselves will have to make recommendations on the future of social assistance on reserves.

The new legislation must be consistent and understandable. However, it must also be efficient, open and publicly accountable. Delivery of social assistance must be responsive to consumers, accessible, fair, simple and open and mutually accountable. In addition, it must be coordinated with other programs and services.

I believe the elimination of the current two systems with new single-tier legislation will give us greater accountability, lower administrative costs, equity across the province and greater equity between individuals, and I seek the support of the House on this very important resolution.

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): I'm pleased to rise this morning to participate in the debate on the resolution by the member for Sarnia.

This resolution calls for the provision of one comprehensive piece of legislation and one administrative framework administered by one level of government to replace the existing general welfare and family benefits delivery system. On its face, this is a resolution which I think we can all support.

But what puzzles me and many other people who have read this resolution is why this proposal is being presented to this House as a private member's resolution by a government backbencher and not as a government bill by the Minister of Community and Social Services.

This government over the years has had ample, ample advice on this issue in the form of several major social assistance reform reports. Three of the major ones have already been mentioned: *Transitions*, *Back on Track* and *Time for Action*.

In March 1991, early in the life of this NDP government, the *Back on Track* report was released. This was the first report of the Advisory Group on New Social Assistance Legislation. This report provided strategic

advice to the Minister of Community and Social Services on new social assistance legislation; March 1991. This report focused on those measures which could be achieved without legislative change as a first step.

The Back on Track report contained, as an appendix, the former minister my colleague the member for York North's statement, "Following public consultation and refinements, I will present a bill to this House in 1992." Mr Speaker, 1992 has come and gone.

On May 2, 1990, when that promise was made, the Transitions report had been received and adopted as a framework for reform, the advisory group had been named and a concrete plan of action had been adopted; May 1990. A firm time line for the introduction of new social assistance legislation had been announced and the previous government was firmly committed to the process and had demonstrated this through the budget decisions of 1989 and 1990. I think that's an important point.

In May 1992 the NDP government released another report, *Time for Action*, an excellent document presented by an excellent group of individuals, which was subtitled *Towards a New Social Assistance System for Ontario* and dealt extensively with the very concerns we are debating here this morning. This report, like *Transitions*, as has been mentioned by the member for Sarnia, has as its first recommendation, "New legislation should replace the existing General Welfare Assistance Act and the Family Benefits Act and create a unified program for all recipients of social assistance, with a single-tier delivery structure." How much more clearly can it be stated?

It goes on to say: "With the merger of the GWA and the FBA Acts into a unified system, a major overlay of complexity will be eliminated. A system divided into two administrative and program streams is inefficient and confusing."

As a matter of fact, the *Time for Action* report begins its first chapter with "A Call to Action," which says, "This advisory group strongly urges the Ontario government"—and may I remind the audience that this is the NDP government, of which this member is a back-bencher—"to move forward with new legislation that will set the system on a new course."

Finally, on January 22 of this year the then Minister of Municipal Affairs announced with great fanfare that he had reached an agreement with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario regarding the disentanglement process. Under the terms of the draft agreement, the province would take full responsibility for 100% of general welfare assistance costs. At that moment I was cautious, and I still am.

As we all know, the government's April 23 mini-budget announcement has seriously undermined the level of trust between the municipalities of this province

and this government. AMO has requested an extension of its response time as municipalities right across Ontario grapple with new and different realities of April 1993.

I ask the member for Sarnia, why are you bringing this resolution to this House today? Why is the Minister of Community and Social Services not introducing new social assistance legislation, which is at least a year overdue? I, of course, will support this resolution, and I would encourage the member for Sarnia to make his voice heard within his own caucus and to encourage the minister to bring forward real legislation, not resolutions in private members' time, to this House for consideration as soon as is physically possible.

1020

Mr Dave Johnson (Don Mills): Before rising to talk about this resolution with regard to combining the GWA and the FBA under one piece of legislation I reminded myself of some of the history and some of the statistics involved, particularly in welfare. Having been involved in the municipal scene, having been a mayor, I see first hand, through the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, the serious situation with regard to welfare.

When I refreshed my memory I was shocked, even though I really recall the statistics and the heartbreak that has happened over the last few years. In 1985, 32,000 case loads were on record in Metropolitan Toronto. The case load was 32,000 in 1985; by 1990 it had gone to 51,000. Today we're looking at a case load in Metropolitan Toronto of 118,000—just here in Metropolitan Toronto—a tremendous increase.

In terms of the unemployable, the case load through that period of time has just about doubled. In 1985 it was 16,000 and by 1993, today, about 31,000. The unemployable—and here's where the real tragedy is—in terms of the unemployable, a 16,000 case load in 1985, 32,000 in 1990 and 87,000 case load in Metropolitan Toronto today. These are people dependent on the welfare system. In total, if you take dependants as well as the case load itself, there are over 200,000 people dependent upon welfare in Metropolitan Toronto today.

This party, of course, supports any move that, for those people and for the people on family benefits, would make the system more efficient and less costly for the taxpayer of this province. However, I must say that to me it seems a somewhat simplistic approach.

The times are constantly changing. The situations we face are constantly changing. When the welfare scheme was formulated in the first instance, it was viewed as being a short-term support for people who needed a little bit of help in between jobs. Today I question whether that's the case.

Today I think we would have to look at welfare—just looking at the case load, looking at the unemployable on the case load—welfare today has become almost an

extended or long-term income support system, and are we talking about this? Even when the reports that have been alluded to by the member for Sarnia, by the member for Ottawa-Rideau, even the report dated May of last year, even when those reports were put out, I think the circumstances were different. We did not at that time view our future in the light that we do today.

The economists today are saying that perhaps we will have a 10% unemployment rate for the next 10 years, that over 10% of the population will be unemployed for the next 10 years. There are different circumstances today. I don't think we're taking that into account.

What we really need is to have a boost in our economy to get people back to work. We need to create jobs, to get people off welfare and back to work. What we get instead is the Jobs Ontario program which—one municipal representative I talked to recently, at any rate, described this as a program that if the economy picks up, the program isn't needed and if the economy doesn't pick up, the program won't work. It's interesting that in terms of the Jobs Ontario applicants in Metropolitan Toronto, 60% of them have at least high school education. These are people who would have a job at some point in time, regardless of the economic situation, and the people who really need the help, the people without the skills, are not able to get involved.

In terms of, will we save money by combining the two programs, will we save on duplication: Yes, there's some possibility that some duplication could be saved, but the auditor has pointed out that within the family benefits system, due to fraud, due to overpayment, we are probably spending in the province of Ontario about \$150 million too much. We should be tackling that today.

We should not wait until this resolution finds its way through to combine the two systems. There is fraud today in the welfare system. There is fraud today in the family benefits system. These are two large systems where the problems should be tackled, regardless of this resolution, and I don't think it should take this resolution to solve those kinds of problems for the taxpayers.

In terms of some of the other problems that will be faced, there are differences, and the member for Sarnia pointed out that there are differences, for example, in the welfare eligibility criteria, across this province. Some municipalities permit students to be eligible for the welfare system under certain circumstances, and other municipalities do not. We need to have discussion about this. How is that going to work? How will there be equity if the system is all melded into one—one family benefits and one welfare system?

Special needs, again, are different across this province. The member for Sarnia has indicated that there should be an equal standard in that case, but there needs to be a whole lot of discussion about this. It just won't happen overnight. Exit programs, skills upgrading to get

people off welfare and back into the workforce, community support programs: These are all different across this province and there needs to be some sort of standardization and some look at that and I don't see, in the preamble here, any mention of those kinds of programs and I think we need to have a healthy discussion on them.

Those are my comments. I will leave it to the member for Burlington South to complete our representation.

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): First of all, I'd like to thank my colleague and my neighbour, who lives down in southwestern Ontario, in our neck of the woods, Mr Huget, for this resolution and congratulate him on his sensitivity and insight. This resolution reflects exactly what the people of the province have been telling the government, and we can't agree more with it.

When my colleague talks about the problems and why is it being introduced today, as I heard from the member for Ottawa—I forget the exact location—Rideau, "Why is it coming forward today," I know my colleague has been pushing for this and we know the time lines around private members and getting the actual opportunity to introduce a resolution. This was put before us a long time ago and I think it's very important that we keep bringing it out.

So I'm kind of glad that my colleague has brought it forward, because we're trying to deal with the issues of getting people back to work. We have a system right now in which two pieces of legislation make it very difficult for people to understand. With the current economic crisis that is upon us in our own communities—and I reflect on own community, where free trade has caused us major job losses, plant closures are there, businesses are going under, and people, for the first time in their lives, are having to depend on social services. It's very disheartening.

When we look at social services, we must not just reflect upon the adults who are there; we must also reflect upon the children who are dependent upon social services in order to provide for basic food and basic shelter in everyday living in our society.

The fact that the system is very complex—people do not understand it. Those on it for the first time have difficulty understanding it. Does it actually meet the needs of those consumers? We believe it doesn't. I heard the member from the Conservative Party raise that it's a disincentive to go back and re-educate. You're absolutely right. There is a disincentive when you enter a community college or a university to upgrade your skills. The disincentive is there because you're cut off social services. That has to be addressed and I know the Minister of Education and Training now, but then under the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, had to address that issue through the OSAP reforms, which are going to make it more viable for people to enter back

into the education system and upgrade their skills. So that's an important step.

But, as indicated in the throne speech, we can no longer continue to tinker with it. We need to make major reform that reflects the concerns of the people of the province of Ontario, making sure that we provide a system that will allow people to access and get back to work, whether it be job training, volunteer work or opportunities that are in their communities.

We also, as a government, recognize that we must benefit the recipients, benefit the administrative people who are having a difficult time and also benefit our own communities around social assistance costs. We are, as a government, embarking—and they're saying, "Why is it taking so long?" Because of the two-tier system that is in place, both at the municipal level and provincial level, it is important for us as a government to work with other levels of government, especially the municipal governments, on the disentanglement exercise that we've been going through and making sure that we are clear in our directions, clear in the administration, clear in our understanding of those communities and the effects on the administration of programs.

1030

There must also be an ownership in the process. As we talk about the 100% funding, you cannot relieve without responsibility. The responsibility of municipalities and their effect around social services is very important.

I'm looking at the time. I've been trying to talk very fast, and I know a number of my colleagues wish to speak on this.

I think the timing is very important, because as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services, we have outlined a reflection of what we believe, which was outlined in the throne speech, that we must make major reforms. But I believe it is very important for this government to take the opportunity that is also put forward with this resolution to send a message loud and clear to the public of Ontario: It is time to make major reforms, reforms under one system that will be administered through one system, which will allow one major goal, and the major goal is to return people back to our workforce so that non-reliance on social services is there, and making sure that the elements around the working environment are there to make sure that protection of good incomes to provide for families is there.

And you're absolutely right. If we can get people off Jobs Ontario and we no longer need Jobs Ontario, it must mean that it's working well, it's relieving our social service case load and yes, there are people entering back into the workforce, which allows not only a financial responsibility but an emotional one too, because not everybody likes to be on social services. They like to have gainful employment, they like to feel

good about themselves, and I believe that if we make a constructive and positive change around social services, we can achieve that: to put self-confidence back into those individuals who are currently faced with the economic crises that are upon us, with job loss through free trade and other economic situations that face them in their communities.

So I would like to say thank you to my colleague. It's unfortunate that it took this time to get here, but I know he, being elected, when he first came to this Legislature addressed the issues around social service and around social justice, and I thank him for the opportunity to speak to this resolution on administrative change and the change that needs to be here in the province of Ontario.

Mr Gilles E. Morin (Carleton East): I am pleased to have this opportunity to respond to Mr Huget's resolution. This resolution does not bring forth any new ideas. It simply reiterates what I and many others have been saying for the last few years; namely, that the system needs to be streamlined to be more efficient and that responsibility for the delivery of social services must be entrusted to one agency with a clearly defined mandate.

Many concerns prompted me to introduce Bill 154, the Government Cheque Cashing Act, which prohibits charging fees for cashing a government cheque. I felt that low-income Ontarians, many of whom depend almost exclusively upon social assistance, were being cheated out of moneys they were entitled to receive in full.

I also proposed other means by which the government could save money while protecting the revenues of low-income Ontarians. I recommended an agreement with financial institutions and the expansion of the direct deposit system. It now appears that this government has finally seen the light. I have learned through a reliable source that mandatory direct deposit will be implemented as a means of streamlining social assistance, thus saving this government millions of dollars. I must congratulate your government. It is the only government that seems to be prepared to take this measure, but why did it take so long?

Something does concern me, however. It is that this government is feeling the pinch of the recession and that is its sole motivation in implementing mandatory direct deposit. Bill 154 addressed all government cheques, not just social assistance, and it was introduced to protect low-income consumers from abusive commercial activities. But the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations would not touch the issue. I simply find it regrettable that this government still does not recognize the need to protect the most vulnerable persons in our society.

Do not misunderstand. I fully support measures that will save money while improving the delivery of social

assistance. But it would be reassuring to know that this government also has heart. At this point in time, its work is not complete. Many low-income persons will remain vulnerable.

I have said repeatedly that Bill 154 is the first step in a series of measures to protect low-income Ontarians and to ensure the responsible delivery of social assistance. This is an important point, because the citizens of Ontario expect their taxes to be well spent, and if this government wants to be consistent, it will legislate the prohibition of fees charged on the cashing of all government cheques. If the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations takes its mandate seriously, it will get involved in this issue as well.

Back in 1989, my resolution regarding cheque-cashing fees enjoyed the support of the House. Responsible administration and consideration of the needs of low-income Ontarians is not the government's prerogative; it is also our responsibility, one that I have taken to heart because I have the duty to protect the vulnerable in our society, and so does everyone else in this House.

As a representative of taxpayers, I am also concerned about the cost of social assistance. The Ministry of Community and Social Services has embarked upon the right track, but it needs to proceed step by step. It should start with the implementation of Bill 154. It has waited too long already.

I will support your resolution, Mr Huget, but tell your minister that Bill 154, which is now awaiting third reading, will save this province millions of dollars, and now is the time to pass this bill.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I would like to just take a few minutes to comment on my colleague's resolution. It would appear to me that this resolution is more or less premature in the fact that it's only dealing with a small administrative problem with social assistance and family welfare benefits. There are much greater problems to be looked at and solved before bringing this together in the form of guaranteed income or some form of payment such as that because, as you know, in the 1992 annual report from the Provincial Auditor, over \$600 million was paid out on account of fraud and overpayment.

There's no mention here to get to the root of this problem. The taxpayer, the worker who does have a job, is getting fed up with having to pay out for social benefits when the administration of these two programs is in such a mess that you can have an amount like \$600 million per year wasted in fraud and overpayment. It is my position that we have to get the problems in order here, and after we get these other problems, the financial problems, corrected and have a firm plan bringing these together, then we can come forward with this resolution.

1040

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): Mr Huget's resolution calls for one new piece of legislation to cover social assistance, and I believe everyone is going to agree on that. He also asks that the legislation have a preamble and a purpose clause that would state the underlying values of the administration system and the fundamental objectives of social assistance. I think that is certainly worth us spending a little time on.

Unfortunately, one hour in this House is certainly not enough to discuss such a very important and, as the previous speaker said, controversial assistance system, which of course takes so much of the province's money. Maybe it's time we called for public forums right across this province to deal head on with people's feelings and attitudes. Maybe it's come to that point.

This morning, though, I'd like to do two things. First of all, he calls on each of us to think about the fundamental objectives of social assistance, and secondly, I would like to also tell you what I feel are some of the very obvious problems that I see in the current system.

The question first is, what is the purpose? I'd like to give you some of the thoughts that my colleagues and I have shared over the past year or so, because certainly since coming to government two and a half years ago we've realized that it is very important that we confront the very basis of what social assistance is all about.

Let's start, I believe, by all of us in this House agreeing that each individual in society is of inherent worth. We start with that premise.

Secondly, income not only provides the basic necessities of life; it is much, much more important than that. It gives us choice over our lives, and if one has choice in meaningful ways, we can develop our lives and therefore contribute to society, and if we don't have that choice in our lives, we will never be able to fully contribute to society and fulfil the resources that we were given.

Thirdly, many are able to gain access to economic resources through employment, but let's face the fact that others are not, either for a short term or for long periods of time, whether it's through disability or other circumstances. That is a fact of life that could befall any of us here.

Also, all citizens should have access to income without fear of punishment or stigma, and that's something that deserves a little further thought.

Some of the problems that I see with the system—and I would like to acknowledge that much work has been done since about 1986 or so, of course, with the reports of Transitions, Back on Track and Time for Action, but I still see that we have to remove the disincentives to work. That is I think the primary problem that all of us across Ontario would say has to be addressed very soon. I cannot stress this too much.

We also have to look at the relationship of the social assistance system to the working poor and how those people on very, very low incomes who are working relate to the levels of income on social assistance.

Of course, now across the province we do have several pilot projects called opportunity planning, and they're so important to try to change attitudes and enable people to get that first step into the workforce.

Our government, I'd also like to point out, over the past two years has provided much, much more money, hard cash, into training. There can be absolutely no question of that, and that's part of this whole system that we're now looking at in the future, the importance of having the opportunity for folks to get into training. And of course we know that a job, to our own lives, to the lives of our families, is crucial to our self-esteem, so the bottom line is, people need a job.

The second most important problem that I see in the current system is the attitudes actually within the system that have been built up for years and years. What we want is not a passive system which marginalizes people and keeps them there on the fringes of society but one that enables people to get back into society. That's what I call an active system, not a passive system.

Over the years, what we have is a system that has evolved and developed with certain attitudes, and that philosophy has then created the system and kept it perpetually the way it has been. It's now time to break that cycle.

Many clients feel that they put their lives on social assistance in what I call "a holding pattern" because of the way in fact they are actually treated by social assistance, and the whole system and society. In fact workers don't have the time, let's face it, in many cases to actually deal with people, to provide them with the opportunities and the knowledge that they need to get those choices in their lives and to get some self-esteem.

There are many other problems. I'd like to touch on a couple of them: First of all, the many categories within the system; secondly, the student welfare question has to be addressed; and thirdly, the OSAP question—when people are on social assistance, they need OSAP many times and also they need child care to enable them to change their lives.

Certainly, now is the time, after two and a half years. The white paper will be released in June and I would push very much—I would ask everyone to help me in this—to get new legislation as soon as possible.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): Colleagues on this side of the House have been lamenting the fact and decrying the fact that the Transitions report is now four years old, and I want to speak to the particular impact of delay on our native communities. We may think that the problems presented by our existing social assistance system as they are presented in our commun-

ities are significant, but I want to tell you something of the impact they're having in our native communities.

Let's begin by understanding that unemployment on our reserves is over 50%. There are 4,000 families who are waiting for new homes. There are 3,800 homes that are in dire need of renovations. Only 50% of our native homes have central heating. Seventy per cent of our on-reserve native population and 32% of our Metis and non-status Indian households receive social assistance.

The Statement of Political Relationship referred to by Mr Huget in his resolution is a very important document and it places a very significant obligation on the government, much more so than a campaign promise would or some informal commitment or moral obligation. This is a Statement of Political Relationship, a formal document signed by representatives of the first nations and the Ontario government, and it places a special obligation on the government to move towards recognition in a very real way of our first nations' right to self-government.

To that end, it's important that the government begin to recognize that the social assistance system is simply not working on reserves, and more importantly, or just as importantly, to recognize that the reasons it's not working on the reserves are not the same reasons it's not working for the rest of Ontario communities.

Briefly put, because I don't have much time to speak to this important issue, the social assistance system as it exists today is rooted in cultural values and premises that are at odds with or fundamentally inconsistent with some of the basic values that our first nations cultures hold. I think you can also make a very good argument to the effect that the social assistance system as it exists today is in fact actually contributing to the tremendous rate of dependency that exists in our first nations communities.

As well, I think it's important to recognize that a system that will work in our non-native communities is not one that will necessarily work on the reserves. In keeping with the Statement of Political Relationship, the solution lies in allowing our first nations to develop and control the system specific to their needs. It won't be easy, but it's an obligation that is imposed upon the government by virtue of the Statement of Political Relationship.

Essentially, we're talking here about a question of jurisdiction. It's going to be absolutely essential that first nations be given the legislative authority to create their own system, one which will allow them to develop a system that is specific to their needs, and recognizes not only the differences between first nations generally speaking and the rest of Ontario but as well the differences between the various first nations.

One final point I want to make is that it's also critical that we recognize that there are some very specific

problems related to our first nations communities: those who are living off reserves. At the present time, to the best of my knowledge, there is no documentation, no studies that have been specific to those needs, so we need a community-based consultation process directed by and for our native peoples, and the results of that kind of a study will allow us to gain some understanding of the best direction in which we can move in order to address off-reserve native populations.

1050

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): I'm pleased to participate in the debate on this resolution today, although I'm rather quite surprised by the government's pre-emptive move through one of its backbenchers to discuss one small, minute aspect of social assistance in this province. I was in this Legislature in 1985 when the NDP third party—it came last in that election—put in its accord document as a condition of making the Liberals the government that social service reform was a big priority, that it had to be on the front burner.

We've had report after report. My colleagues in the Liberal Party have been talking about reports that are four, five and, some reports, six years old. The most important report in my view that's come down in the last eight years since the Liberals and the NDP have been playing with the poor is the issue of the auditor's report of 1992.

What emerged from this report was so compelling, that the amount of abuse and the amount of poor administrative structures by the government of the day was such that as much as 10% of the \$6.2 billion spent by taxpayers for social assistance in this province—10% of it, \$600 million—was not recovered when it was fraud or overpayment or misplaced or sent out the door and should not have gone out of these buildings to recipients who didn't deserve it.

We're here in this Legislature today discussing maybe merging the two systems after eight years of discussion, maybe combining a few little things here. Nowhere in this resolution is there anything about the taxpayers who are paying for this in this province. But three miles from here, if you go right down to the Royal York Hotel, all the major unions in this province are sitting at the social contract table and they're saying to Bob Rae and his government, "Before you lay off a teacher in a school who's helping a child with learning difficulties, before you lay off a nurse in a hospital who's helping our parents who may be ill, before you lay off an ambulance worker who's protecting the people of this province who are injured, why don't you look at the \$600 million that the auditor says you can save?"

People talk about there should be dignity and people shouldn't have to feel stigmatized by collecting welfare. I tell you that the people who are ripping off our welfare system are laughing at this government and

they're laughing at today's debate talking about changing a few little systems.

You in your throne speech said, "No amount of tinkering's going to help this system." Well, I beg to differ with you. The auditor's report was so compelling that the public accounts committee started meeting several months ago. The evidence was overwhelming about the changes that could be made to bring in a system with integrity, within a system that can respond to the needs of the poor but also stop the growing fraud and abuse that's occurring in our system.

But instead of the government cooperating with the opposition members who were pursuing this, the government members hijacked the committee and that report is not even being written. Their simple statement was, "We think we're doing a good job." Well, you're not doing a good job. The auditor says you're not doing a good job. There are courts all over this province where people who are defrauding welfare are going before a judge; the judges don't think you're doing a good job. The municipalities don't think you're doing a good job. But you people are patting yourselves on the back because you have some resolution that says at some future event this is going to be a priority for us.

If this government was really committed, it would look for example to the province of Quebec where they brought in legislation to catch welfare cheats. Their levels of support for welfare recipients have improved in Quebec. Why? Because they're catching people who are defrauding the system. Quebec's system is working so well that they're catching people from their own province coming to Ontario and collecting welfare. And you know what happens? Because Ontario says, "Hey, we don't want to hear about it; that would be a violation of their rights," they get cut off their Quebec welfare because they can get it in Ontario.

What kind of stupidity, what kind of further example do we need to demonstrate that we have a system out of control and a government that lacks the commitment to do something about it?

If you go to New Brunswick, it has brought in a whole series of reforms, if that's the word the government wants to use, that allow the system to respond to the real need. I'll repeat that: It allows the system to respond to the real need. Taxpayers deserve governments that respect that governments don't pay the bills; people pay the bills, taxpayers pay the bills.

That's the message that should be on the floor of the Legislature today. That's the message of the minority report which was submitted by the Conservative Party, with nine recommendations to assist with the \$600-million saving. If you'd have listened three years ago when we raised it, we would have had nearly \$2 billion in savings instead of shutting down hospital beds and closing day care centres. I look to save the money in this system.

Mr David Winninger (London South): Unlike the member for Burlington South, I'm not going to devote all my time to bashing the welfare recipients when they're down. Most right-thinking people know that only 2% to 3% of all recipients of social assistance are receiving social assistance fraudulently, so you're completely diverting attention from the very real needs of people on social assistance.

I applaud the member for Sarnia for bringing forward this resolution, which answers the clarion call for integration of the two systems made in the Transitions report under the Liberal government, made in the Time for Action report and made in the Back on Track report. I applaud the member for taking the initiative in this direction, and I also congratulate the member for bringing forward a resolution that is, as I'm sure my colleague for Ottawa South will agree, sensitive to the specific needs of first nations.

The member for Ottawa South acknowledged the fact that the Statement of Political Relationship, a very historic document, the first of its kind in all of Canada, recognized that we're dealing with the first nations of Ontario on a government-to-government basis within the Canadian constitutional framework. It's quite clear that, as a group, native people are still quite impoverished. They're underemployed. They're disproportionately dependent on government transfers. Twenty-six per cent of native income comes from government transfers compared to 12% of all other Ontarians. However, much of these government transfers are actually used to fuel economic development towards making our first nations more self-sufficient.

This economic hardship, which was detailed in the Transitions report and numerous other reports, both on and off native reserves, coupled with the historic lack of control over the way in which social welfare programs are delivered—although more and more first nations are now administering their own social assistance, some even requiring work in consideration of social assistance. The economic hardship, coupled with the historic lack of control and its attendant harmful effects, needs to be corrected by creating a system of social assistance that is, as the report of the first nations' community project team—which, I might indicate to the member for Ottawa South, was not only made up of on-reserve native representatives; it was also composed of off-reserve native representatives—is recommending, improving and promoting first nations' control of social welfare and making the regulations and policies that flow from that legislation more sensitive to the economic, social and cultural concerns of our first nations community.

I think that's a message that comes through loud and clear in the resolution of the member for Sarnia.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Sarnia has two minutes to make response.

1100

Mr Huget: I'd like to thank the members for Ottawa-Rideau, Don Mills, Chatham-Kent, Carleton East, Lanark-Renfrew, Niagara Falls, Ottawa South, Burlington South and London South for comments on my resolution.

I think it's important to understand, at least from the viewing public's point of view, what private members' hour is all about. It's an opportunity for private members, whether they're government or opposition, to bring forward items and issues that concern them and concern their constituents, and it's in that spirit that I bring forward this resolution. I am far less interested in the partisan politics of the opposition or third party on an important issue that has not only troubled me but my constituents for many, many years.

One of the things I hope to accomplish, and in fact have accomplished, is an elevated debate on a very important issue. I hope that elevated debate will increase the momentum of the government to move forward with social assistance reform. One of the reforms, just one of the reforms, that is necessary—in fact essential to social assistance in this province—is the elimination of the two-tier, two-delivery agent system. There is no point in fooling around with two systems that don't work. We need a new system in this province. We need a new system for recipients, we need a new system for administrators—

Mr Jackson: Why are they hiding the bill from you? Why won't they show you the bill? Don't they trust you with the bill?

Mr Huget: —and, yes, to the member for Burlington South—

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Huget: —we need a new system that prevents fraud and overpayment.

I'm very pleased to bring this resolution forward. I appreciate the support and comments of those who have supported me, and certainly appreciate and understand the political partisanship of those who have not.

The Acting Speaker: Before I call for orders of the day, I do want to say to the honourable member for Burlington South that when he was speaking there were no interjections. I wish he would accord the same rights to the other members of this House.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE COMMERCE INTERPROVINCIAL

Mr Grandmaitre moved private member's notice of motion number 5:

That, in the opinion of this House,

Since for years a number of irritants and obstacles have hindered the free movement of people, goods and services from one side of the Ottawa River to the other in the national capital region; and

Since the national capital region could become a national model of economic integration reflecting the cultural duality of Canada; and

Since, at the present time, the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton and the Communauté urbaine de l'Outaouais have struck a joint working committee for the purpose of breaking down existing barriers; and

Since the joint committee has already passed two resolutions, one for purchasing on an unrestricted, competitive basis, and one for personnel recruitment without regard to place of residence; and

Since, furthermore, the committee has launched an in-depth study into the situation in the construction industry with a view to alleviating the sources of frustration in that industry, as well as a project for identifying interprovincial barriers that need to be eliminated;

Therefore, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs should take steps, including setting up discussions with the minister's Quebec counterpart, so that the positive initiatives undertaken at the regional level can be followed up at the provincial level at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Pursuant to standing order 96(c)(i), the honourable member has 10 minutes for his presentation.

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): In the last seven days, much has been said in this House on interprovincial barriers. Only last Thursday my colleague the member for Carleton, Mr Sterling, introduced a resolution entitled Employment Equity Policy, and I want to assure the members of this House that in the Ottawa-Carleton region this resolution and Mr Sterling's resolution do have great interest.

Interprovincial barriers are not new between the province of Ontario and the province of Quebec. They date back to the early 1930s. But in the last 15 years, since 1977, when new laws and regulations were introduced in the province of Quebec, it has been chaos and my resolution of today wants to improve this climate. I think the time has come that we should resolve our differences; our interprovincial barriers should be abolished.

Back in 1977, again when a mobility policy was introduced by the province of Quebec—and this is a letter from the Canadian Construction Association reminding me of this labour mobility policy, which reads:

"Bidders must engage subcontractors who have a permanent establishment in Quebec and who have the personnel required to do the work. Exceptions are allowed where no specified subcontractor exists in the province of Quebec or where a reasonable price cannot be obtained. Failure to comply with this requirement allows the contracting authority to retain 10% of the subcontractor price.

"Finally, to bring outside construction workers into the province of Quebec, they must obtain a competency card from the Commission de la construction du Québec, which is responsible for monitoring the movement of construction workers in Quebec and which provides placement services. To obtain this card, you must first be recognized in your specific trade by the Centre Travail-Québec. Local residents are given a high priority in this system. Essentially, out-of-province workers will not qualify for a competency card unless they can demonstrate they possess a specialized skill which is not available in the province of Quebec."

This is one of the reasons why so many tradespeople from the province of Quebec are crossing the bridge every day in my region of Ottawa-Carleton to work in Ontario, for the simple reason that these people do have a competency card but don't have a work permit. These people who do work in the province of Quebec without a working permit are even called "illegals." Imagine: illegals.

I know that times are tough in the province of Ontario and in Quebec. Along came the 1981-82 recession, free trade and now we are going through another recession, the 1990-93 recession, which is not over with. Few major projects are taking place in the province of Quebec and in Ottawa-Carleton for many economic reasons, and my resolution today not only deals with the workers, but I want all barriers abolished that prevent people or goods or services from having free circulation or access in the province of Ontario.

I think we have reached an intolerable situation and we must act, and I think the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton and la Communauté urbaine de l'Outaouais have acted. Now it is up to us. It is up to the province of Ontario and to the province of Quebec to sit down at the same table and negotiate a way or ways to abolish these barriers.

Referring to the Ottawa-Carleton and CUO committee, which is chaired by the regional chairman of Ottawa-Carleton, Mr Peter Clark, and also the mayor of Gatineau, Robert Labine, this is the mandate of the working committee:

It "will be responsible for completion of the study and will provide a profile of the movement of construction workers and companies between the two territories and provide a forecast of the construction activity in the next 10 years in the Outaouais." It "will be particularly involved in the analysis of the Quebec legislation and regulations that prevent the free movement of construction workers and companies between both shores."

My colleague the member for S-D-G & East Grenville and I do sit on the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association and we were privileged, we were invited to sit on the RMOC-CUO committee just about four weeks ago. Some real work is being done by the two regional municipalities.

1110

I have a letter from my regional chair, Mr Peter Clark, which is addressed to Frances Lankin, the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, which says, and I'll read just a few lines:

"While these employment practices do seem unfair, we believe that the best way to overcome provincial employment barriers is by working collectively with our colleagues in Quebec to constructively address these very important issues. The province of New Brunswick has recently retaliated against Quebec construction laws by imposing the same conditions on construction companies from Quebec that Quebec imposes on construction companies from New Brunswick." This is the important line, "This retaliation has resulted in a regional trade war. This illustrates exactly what we do not want for the national capital region."

I want to make it very clear that I want to give negotiations a chance to work, and I was pleased to hear from Minister Lankin, the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, that she will be part of a meeting in June, June 7 and 8 of next month, along with the Premier of this province, and they will sit down with the province of Quebec to deal with these barriers.

Also I want to say something about the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association, which was newly created. I think it's very, very important to tell the people of Ontario that there is something going on between parliamentarians of Quebec and Ontario, and I'm very, very pleased that we are discussing issues that affect both sides of the river.

The objectives of the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association are very clear:

"The association's objectives are to foster the development of interparliamentary cooperation between both assemblies and thereby serve to further understanding, particularly in the fields of legislation, culture, economics, science and technology, and generally reinforce greater friendship, goodwill and mutual understanding."

Those are the objectives of the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association. I'm positive that we will work more closely with the province of Quebec and resolve our differences.

This weekend, Mr Speaker, and you are a member of the Ontario-Québec Parliamentary Association, in Toronto we will meet with the province of Quebec and the members of Quebec will receive a copy of Mr Sterling's resolution along with mine. We want to resolve these differences. We want to give negotiations a chance to work.

Il est tellement important. Le temps est venu d'agir. Il faut éliminer les barrières qui existent entre l'Ontario et le Québec et, une fois pour toute, donner le libre-échange ou accès — des gens, des services et des produits de l'Ontario et du Québec.

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I'm interested in reading the resolution today and I'm somewhat between wanting to vote for this and wanting to vote against it. One might ask what the difference is between this resolution and the resolution I presented to this Legislature and received approval for last week.

I think that the difference in it is marked, and this particular resolution calls for more talk; more talk is what we're talking about today. I think one of the reasons that my resolution gained support last week was that the members of this Legislature, voting independently, had decided that it was time for action, that the time for talk was past. "We needed to put fire to fight fire," were the words of one of the opposition members whom I talked to as we left this Legislature last week.

The proponent of this resolution put forward the letter from Peter Clark, the regional chairman, and he said Mr Clark was trying to travel the high road, so to speak, and saying that by putting forward retaliatory measures in the province of Ontario we would not achieve any kind of resolution to this problem. I think nothing could be further from the truth, and I beg to differ with the regional chairman of Ottawa-Carleton. I believe that it's time for action and the time is now.

However, the resolution that Mr Grandmaître, the member for Ottawa East, puts forward goes over a further and a wider scope than the resolution I put forward. It includes as well other matters outside of the construction field.

During the past week, as you can imagine, I have received many correspondences, letters etc, from various different quarters. I received from a Montreal resident a copy of the Montreal Gazette dated May 4, 1993. In it he included the page relating to tenders. If you look on this particular sheet, there are about 20 different tenders on this sheet.

There is an invitation to tender on a new elementary school, and it says, "Only contractors operating under the Quebec policy, ie, main office of the contractor in Quebec." Quebec hydro has eight different projects that it's tendering on. On each one of those eight, it says, "Eligibility: place of business in Quebec," "Place of business in Quebec," "Place of business in Quebec." All eight of them say that.

Concordia University, which of course, as you know, the university sector is funded by both provincial and federal funds—not only the provinces pay the bills to build our universities, but very much the federal government—Concordia University: "Only those businesses with their main place of business in Quebec." McGill University, there are two tenders. Only those with their main place of business in Quebec can go in on those. Lastly, the city of Montreal has another tender, "Only those with the main place of business in Quebec."

I have received numerous calls from contractors in

this province of Ontario saying that this is not fair. They are fed up with the talk that my government engaged in, the Liberal government engaged in and the New Democratic Party government has now engaged in for over 15 years, with no resolution to this problem. There is serious unfairness with regard to the present construction laws and the ability for our construction workers to cross over into the province of Quebec and have the same opportunity as those workers coming the other way.

The resolution put forward by my friend from Ottawa East is very, very much typical of the Liberal Party of Ontario in not being willing to take definitive hard stands to meet problems. We feel in this party that it is time for a hard definitive stand, as Frank McKenna, the Premier of New Brunswick, has done for his province.

I will, however, say that I will support the resolution, and I will be here to vote. The Liberal members of this Legislature did not see fit to come into this Legislature last week, save and except for the member for Nepean, from Ottawa, the eastern part of this province, and put their feelings on record as to how they wanted to vote on this particular matter. I should say that also the member for Cornwall from the Liberal caucus appeared at that time.

We will be here to vote. Anything that will resolve this matter we will support. We would, however, prefer hard action and less talk.

1120

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): I am supporting the resolution by Monsieur Grandmaître, the member for Ottawa East, because I think both in substance and in process he's doing the right thing.

Substance is that Ontario workers and companies are having a difficult time entering into the Quebec market. Substance is that Quebec is erecting barriers that prevent us from entering into its market. We agree with that. There is no doubt and no question that the inability of Ontario construction workers and companies to work on projects in Quebec has to be dealt with. The question we debated last week is how to do that. This is why I believe that the process that is suggested is something that I support very strongly.

I want to add that the process that is suggested is that,

"The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs should take steps, including setting up discussions with the minister's Quebec counterpart, so that the positive initiatives undertaken at the regional level can be followed up at the provincial level at the earliest possible opportunity."

I presume that Monsieur Grandmaître means to name the Premier in this case and not the minister who is involved on matters of trade, but he should remember and he should know that the minister who deals with

this particular issue in Quebec is not the Premier but rather another minister, and I'm not quite clear what he's suggesting in terms of who it is that he's referring to, whether it should be the premiers or whether it should be other ministers who are dealing with trade matters.

That's something of course that can be clarified, but I have no problems that the premiers of Ontario and Quebec get together to talk about how to reduce those barriers. We've done that in the constitutional discussions, where four of the ministers of intergovernmental affairs were premiers and the others were not. It presents some problem, I suppose, in some cases, but it added a great deal of credibility that we had four premiers at those constitutional conferences to deal with all matters as they relate to each other. We have no problems with that.

We think we've made tremendous headway in attempting to reduce those barriers, so I want to support the suggestion that Monsieur Grandmaître has made that the premiers, which I think is his intent, get together and move this agenda. It's also quite possible that the premiers instructed their ministers to move quickly on this matter and deal with it as quickly as possible.

But I want to talk a bit about what's been happening in order for our audiences to understand what steps have been taken. On March 18, 1993, the committee of ministers on internal trade agreed to begin comprehensive negotiations to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers in Canada. As well, ministers confirmed a moratorium on the creation of new trade barriers.

If you recall, I made the argument last week that New Brunswick's actions have breached that agreement. They were erecting similar barriers as Quebec. I pointed out last week that Mr Sterling's motion, which many in this House have supported, would do the same thing. The proposed solution was to erect barriers to solve barrier problems, and I argued that that was a mistake. I argued that that would exacerbate our trade problems with each other. In my view, it's in the overall interest of all governments in Canada to work to eliminate barriers to trade to avoid taking actions which would lead to even greater barriers to trade between the provinces, and that's the resolution that we passed here last week.

In my view, that enhances and exacerbates the problem. In my view, that encourages provincial cannibalism. In my view, that measure that we took last week proposes a guillotine measure to solve something that intergovernmental ministers on trade should be dealing with, which is what they're dealing with. That is the way to go. Any other proposed way to go will increase the frictions between provinces in Canada, and I don't think that's what we want to do.

The process that we are suggesting, and that I am supporting, allows for several things. If we get rid of barriers today, it doesn't solve all of our problems; there

are things that need to be dealt with. We need, as guiding principles, to deal with other issues that are part of these trade discussions. We need to solve issues such as having full disclosure of information, legislation, regulations, policies and practices that have the potential to impede a single integrated market in Canada.

We need exceptions and transition periods as well as special needs consistent with regional development objectives in Canada. We need to take into account the importance of environmental objectives, consumer protection and labour standards. All of these things need to be debated in a calm setting, in a setting where we are sharing with each other the types of problems that provinces are experiencing and what kinds of resolutions need to be put into place in order to satisfy the different needs we all have in our provinces, because we're not all the same. We're different, and these guiding principles that I alluded to need to be taken into account. Applying the guillotine to this doesn't deal with that.

I suggest to Mr Sterling, in supporting Mr Grandmaître's motion, that we have to give the ministers on internal trade, who are meeting, as I understand it, in the week of June in Vancouver, the time to solve this in an amicable way, as it should be, and give them the opportunity to deal with the guiding principles that I spoke about and not undermine that process that is fully in place by taking measures that will exacerbate this problem in a very, very disturbing way.

Mr Gilles E. Morin (Carleton East): It is a pleasure for me to rise and support the resolution brought forward by my colleague regarding the removal of interprovincial barriers in general and the removal of trade irritants between Ontario and Quebec in particular.

Cette résolution vient à point. Nous n'avons plus de temps à perdre.

I would like everyone to keep in mind the following statistics as we debate this resolution. The World Competitiveness Report, issued by IMD International and the World Economic Forum in 1992, ranked Canada 11th out of 22 major industrial countries. In 1991 Canada was in sixth place, and five years ago it ranked fifth. These statistics are sobering and disturbing. What is happening to Canada, to a country that enjoys so many natural advantages and that should be competing as effectively as other nations?

It is fair to say that interprovincial barriers within Canada are contributing to the decline of Canada's competitiveness abroad. Barriers also have a negative impact on our internal economy. Even though tariff barriers between provinces are prohibited by the Constitution Act, the proliferation of non-tariff barriers has created an extremely protectionist internal economy. This situation is ultimately to no one's advantage.

Il est estimé que plusieurs milliards de dollars sont

perdus chaque année en raison des barrières commerciales interprovinciales. Nous ne pouvons plus nous permettre un tel gaspillage de ressources humaines, naturelles et de capitaux.

Concerns over interprovincial trade barriers are not new. Back in 1937 the Rowell-Sirois commission studied this very issue. Its conclusions were, not surprisingly, quite similar to the criticisms we are hearing today. More recently, Canadian governments at the federal and provincial levels consider the issue serious enough to be included in the package of constitutional reforms.

Part of the problem, however, is that, historically, provincial governments have hesitated to act decisively and to eliminate barriers. My colleague's resolution is innovative in that he proposes the national capital region as a model of economic integration reflecting the cultural duality of Canada. This project would have great symbolic value, but more importantly, it would demonstrate very clearly what can be accomplished when all players involved work together and agree on the desired outcome. Since direction from above has been lacking, why should regional governments not lead the way and show what can be done?

1130

Interprovincial barriers have hindered the free movement of people, goods and services from one side of the Ottawa River to the other in the national capital region for many years. Many persons have complained, and the problem is serious. I am pleased to say that not only are my colleagues and myself from the area listening, but we are also acting upon this issue. We are seeking a solution to this problem.

In January of this year, Mr Grandmaître indicated that he would introduce the present resolution. Since then, the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton and the Communauté urbaine de l'Outaouais have commissioned a joint study pertaining to interprovincial trade barriers.

What I find most positive is the emphasis placed upon a constructive approach to this matter, as opposed to the strident calls for retaliation, as we have heard recently and as we have heard again this morning. We must not follow the New Brunswick example. A regional or provincial trade war is the last thing anybody needs at this time. I would add that there exist better ways of making one's point than playing tit for tat.

As my colleague the member for Ottawa East stated just a minute ago, the objectives of the Ontario-Quebec association are very clear. These objectives support the need to establish a positive and open climate conducive to the exchange and discussion of ideas. As a member of this association, I can assure you that excellent relations have developed between members of both assemblies. During our meeting in Quebec City last year, we discussed the issue of interprovincial barriers.

We acknowledged the problem and recognized the need to deal with it.

Je tiens absolument à souligner l'importance du dialogue entre nous et nos homologues québécois. Nous devons travailler ensemble, agir dans la concertation et surtout ne pas céder à l'esprit de vengeance qui court. La mesquinerie et le manque de prévoyance ne donnent absolument rien. La coopération en vue d'un objectif commun peut, au contraire, nous rapporter beaucoup.

This is an important point: We must not bring old and unjustified resentment against Quebec into this debate. I know that the situation in the construction industry is a difficult one in the Ottawa-Carleton region; my office has received many complaints. But the issue must be understood from a wider perspective, because it is not just a local issue. The fact is that provincial governments, for a number of reasons, have maintained trade barriers despite their repeated commitments to free trade within Canada. Ontario is as guilty as any province in this respect. Also, many industries with vested interests benefit from protectionist policies and advocate the status quo.

To single out Quebec as the villain is misleading. The member for Kenora proved this last week by explaining how contractors from Manitoba appear to benefit from certain advantages, such as lower provincial sales tax, which places them in a better position to compete against contractors from Ontario.

In conclusion, I support my colleague's resolution because it is reasonable, it is positive and it is realistic.

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): It's always a pleasure to support a colleague in his quest for fairness. However, the problem here, as I see it, is that we've been attempting to get this fairness now through discussions, through a committee. My colleague the member for Carleton, Mr Sterling, and my colleague who just preceded me in the debate, the member for Ottawa East, belong to this committee, and we have discussed till we're blue in the face. What's occurred is that insult has been added to injury. We have not corrected a very unfair situation, but in many instances we've added some more barriers, and I'm very concerned about that.

To me, it's much more than a regional issue. It certainly covers my riding, and S-D-G & East Grenville is not considered to be in the greater Outaouais area; it's in eastern Ontario. It's a problem that's been there and been a major irritant for a long time.

The reason I say that insult's been added to injury is that we now have farm pickups that come from my area with Ontario plates on them going to Quebec. If they have any commercial writing on them at all, they are subject to a \$750 fine plus some court costs, which is costing well over \$800, because they don't have the Quebec fuel sticker on them. That just came in in the

last year and a half while we were negotiating to attempt to correct the labour problems in the construction industry, access by Ontario workers to Quebec—and we do not have access.

Does the province of Quebec realize what's going on? I believe the elected politicians realize what's going on: The province is being run by the unions. The union of construction workers calls the shots. They not only call the shots on workers outside the province of Quebec, but they call the shots within 17 distinct and separate areas within the province, where you have to have a working permit to go from one region to another. It doesn't make a lot of sense.

The reason I have to support my colleague the member for Ottawa West today and supported very strongly my colleague from Carleton last week is that we have not been able to accomplish any progress through negotiations. I believe that Frank McKenna, the Premier of New Brunswick, had the right idea. He got their attention. We seem to have problems getting their attention.

I will simply quote some of the requirements that the tendering process requires in Quebec. It reads as follows, verbatim:

«Il existe un nombre de secteurs d'emploi au Québec qui exigent un lieu de résidence au Québec, exigence que l'on ne trouve pas en Ontario. Il y a le secteur minier, qui ne concerne pas la région de l'Outaouais, mais le secteur de construction, qui est plus important pour la région, et la fonction publique du Québec. Notons que les règles de l'Office de la construction empêchent les résidents d'Ottawa-Carleton de travailler du côté québécois, alors que de 2 000 à 4 000 résidents du Québec travaillent sur les chantiers ontariens. Les exigences exigent que les compagnies et leurs bureaux-chefs soient au Québec et exigent que les travailleurs soient du Québec.

What more can I tell you? The requirements are there and they're fairly simple. You must have your headquarters in the province of Quebec, and that is the only way you can get to work on Quebec construction sites.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association has estimated that interprovincial trade barriers to Canadians cost \$6.5 billion a year, or over \$1,000 for a family of four, on an annual basis on these provincial government procurement policies regarding food processing, construction, consulting engineer, machine tool sales, import and distribution of metal-cutting machines, steel, electrical systems, boilers etc. We are working towards a global economy, and yet we have these major interprovincial barriers that must be taken down.

1140

I have no hesitation whatever in supporting my colleague from Ottawa East in his resolution. Let's hope we can get their attention at least.

M. Gilles Bisson (Cochrane-Sud) : Je veux aujourd'hui signaler mon intention, comme je pense l'intention de la plupart des députés de l'Assemblée, de dire qu'on est en faveur de la résolution du député d'Ottawa-Est.

Je veux vous dire pourquoi moi, je suis en faveur. Je pense que ce que le député a dit, c'est réellement la question que je pense que tous les députés de l'Assemblée, comme la plupart de la population ontarienne, reconnaissent. Ils reconnaissent que c'est très important qu'on ait une attitude entre les deux provinces pour être capables de faire un échange libre entre les provinces.

La manière, je pense, d'être capable d'atteindre ce point-là, c'est de s'asseoir comme gouvernement responsable et négocier entre les provinces et le fédéral une entente qui va jusqu'au point de dire, «Si je suis un contractuel ou si je suis une industrie au Québec ou en Ontario, je peux faire des affaires à travers la frontière Québec-Ontario sans avoir des restrictions.» Je pense que l'approche que le député prend est une approche qui est très responsable et je pense que c'est une approche qui fait du bon sens, un peu différente de celle du député de Carleton-Est, la semaine passée, qui avait la même idée mais d'une manière un peu différente.

Je veux rien que signaler deux affaires aux députés ici et au monde qui regarde. Premièrement, il faut reconnaître quelque chose. L'Ontario et le Québec, quand ça vient aux échanges, à l'argent qu'on échange entre nous deux, l'économie québécoise et ontarienne sont très importantes. Le Québec, quand ça en vient à leurs ventes, l'Ontario représente la plus grosse économie pour acheter leurs produits, qui a pour effet la production au Québec.

Nous autres, ici en Ontario, 40 % de toutes nos exportations hors de la province de l'Ontario vont directement au Québec. Pour quelqu'un de dire qu'on va être capables d'augmenter ces nombres-là en ayant une guerre entre le Québec et l'Ontario faisant affaire avec les questions d'échanges, je pense que je pourrais nuire à ces chiffres-là. Je pense que, pour être responsable, comme le député d'Ottawa-Est dit, on a besoin de trouver une manière de négocier une entente sans entrer en guerre entre les deux économies qui pourrait nuire. Je pense qu'à la fin de la journée, ses chiffres sont très importants. Alors, rappelez-vous : 40 % de nos exportations de l'Ontario vont directement au Québec. Je pense que ça a besoin d'être signalé.

L'autre affaire que je pense le monde a besoin de reconnaître, c'est que déjà la province de l'Ontario, avec le Québec et d'autres provinces à travers le Canada, face au gouvernement fédéral avec le leadership de M. Mulroney, a fait une entente en 1992 faisant affaire avec une entente interprovinciale sur les achats du gouvernement. Quoiqu'on ait fait une entente à négocier à ce point-là, c'est que n'importe quelle province au Canada, ou le fédéral, peut tourner de bord et dire, «Écoute, on ne vous laisse pas, parce que vous êtes Ontariens, vous êtes pas

Québécois, vous êtes pas Manitobains, acheter nos produits», faisant affaire avec government procurements.

Si on était capable de trouver une entente faisant affaire avec cette question, qui est très importante parce que c'est la moitié du problème, je pense qu'on pourrait s'asseoir comme province responsable ici au Canada et en venir à une entente faisant affaire avec comment être capable de «dealer» avec la question à laquelle nous faisons face aujourd'hui faisant affaire avec l'industrie de la construction.

I'd like to say directly to my friend from Carleton, last week he stood in this assembly and put forward a resolution that I think had the same intent as the member for Ottawa East's, except his approach was very different. I have difficulty with the approach, because he was advocating an approach that would have said: "Let's fight fire with fire. Let's go into a trade war with Quebec"—basically, that would have been the result of that—"and let's show them that we can negotiate from a position of strength."

I think it's a very interesting point for the Conservative Party of Ontario to make, Mr Speaker, because I would remind you, and I'm sure you understand, that its own federal cousins in Ottawa do not support such an approach. If we take a look at the negotiations under the free trade agreement, the whole approach of the Conservatives in Ottawa has been to remove interprovincial trade barriers and not to have trade wars. I think they recognize, like most other people recognize, that once you start getting into trade wars, you could lead yourself down a path economically that could be very destructive.

Also, just recently, Mr Speaker, you would be aware that their federal cousins in Ottawa, Mr Mulroney and the Conservative Party, are in the process of ratifying a humongous trade deal called the North American free trade agreement. Under NAFTA, there's a clause in there that says that no government, in Canada, the United States or Mexico, is going to have the right to protect its markets with regard to procurement on the part of governments. In other words, that means that under NAFTA, the province of Ontario could not say, "We're only going to buy our goods from people who make those goods or service those goods from the province of Ontario." We would be contravening NAFTA.

Now, I have problems with NAFTA, but I have a little bit of difficulty with the member for Carleton, how he can on one hand advocate freer trade with Mexico and Canada, to say that we have to open up the procurement process with those people, and then throw barriers up between Quebec and Ontario. I think it's ludicrous for the member to take that position.

I would think—I hope not; I don't want to put words into his mouth—it's more of a political statement he made last week in this House rather than an economic statement, because what he is advocating is clearly interprovincial trade wars with Quebec. I do believe that

the Conservative Party is opposed to interprovincial trade wars. I think, rather, what he was speaking to is a resentment within the province of Ontario, because it does exist, over the whole question of a lack of jobs within our economy and seeing workers from Quebec coming into our province.

I deal with that in my riding of Cochrane South, the same as the member from Ottawa, my colleague Mrs Gigantes, deals with in Ottawa, and it's difficult for people to come to terms with. But when you sit down as rational people and you say, "Listen, the way of dealing with this is not to take a hammer and hit somebody else on the head," to turn around and to say, "Let's deal with it by having a tit-for-tat war"—the approach I think most people would recognize is to remove them by negotiations.

We've negotiated the first part of the agreement, which is that now no province in Canada can bar another province from buying procurement products for that province. We've already negotiated half of this. We negotiated that in 1992, saying point blank, "If you're a Quebec company or if you're an Ontario company, or you're a government, you can't stop people from buying from within the country."

The second part of that is a question of the construction industry. We are now going to the table. We have a willingness on the part of their federal cousins in Ottawa, with the Conservative Party, to deal with this. I applaud the federal government for working with us on that initiative. The Quebec government is sort of indicating as if there might be some movement there. It's a little bit here and there, I agree, but I think by responsibly walking to the negotiating table together, we can get somewhere in the end and be able to negotiate a removal of interprovincial trade barriers that would be to the benefit of those people in Ontario as well as people in Quebec and all across the country.

I would support the member for Ottawa East's resolution and I urge every member to support it because I think it is a prudent approach.

M. Jean Poirier (Prescott et Russell) : Je voulais vous indiquer que je vais appuyer très fortement la résolution de mon collègue le député d'Ottawa-Est, à titre premièrement de critique de l'opposition officielle aux Affaires intergouvernementales, mais également à titre de député d'une circonscription frontalière dans l'est de l'Ontario.

Évidemment, lorsqu'on a un système de libre-échange avec les États-Unis et le Mexique — c'est absolument bizarre qu'on puisse l'avoir avec Tijuana et El Paso au Mexique mais qu'on ne puisse pas l'avoir avec Grenville et Gatineau, à l'autre côté de la rivière des Outaouais.

Les choses sont vraiment à l'envers dans ce monde et on peut remercier les Conservateurs, au niveau fédéral, de ce genre de cadeau prématuré, d'avoir coprésenté cela

sur la scène internationale et d'avoir oublié la scène interprovinciale. On appelle ça, à la campagne, mettre la charrue devant les boeufs, et en parlant de boeufs, allons-y bien.

Ça fait longtemps que je reçois du courrier, des appels de gens de l'Ontario et de Prescott et Russell qui sont très furieux des anomalies de la situation dans le système de libre-échange interprovincial entre l'Ontario et le Québec. J'apprends également que la même situation se produit entre l'Ontario et le Manitoba.

La rivière des Outaouais nous sépare dans l'est avec nos collègues, notre famille du Québec. Je suis certain que le peuple des Outaouais, au moment où ils se promenaient en remontant ou en descendant à la rivière, leur rivière, qu'il n'y avait pas ce genre de niaiseries-là entre les deux provinces comme on le voit présentement.

Mes collègues parlementaires, nous siégeons à l'Association interparlementaire Ontario-Québec et le sous-comité de l'est de l'Ontario et de l'ouest du Québec, nous avons tenu un excellent dialogue. Le moment est venu de régler les problèmes.

Mes collègues auparavant ont fait mention justement des problèmes qui existaient, des essais de négociations. Bien sûr que jusqu'à présent, ça n'a pas été reluisant, mais je suis convaincu que le moment est arrivé et que les parlementaires de l'Ontario et du Québec et aussi du Manitoba sauront, à ce moment-ci, trouver la solution idéale au moyen de résolutions comme celle de mon collègue d'Ottawa-Est et sûrement pas à coup de marteau sur des mouches comme celle proposée par mon collègue le député de Carleton.

Ce n'est pas en commençant avec des menaces, comme l'a fait le Nouveau-Brunswick, qu'on va régler le problème. Bien sûr qu'il y a des irritants. Bien sûr que les gens sont émotionnels. Bien sûr que les gens, comme on dit, sont en beau joulavers et qu'ils le sont sûrement dans les circonscriptions de Carleton et de S-D-G & Grenville-Est et dans Prescott et Russell. Mais le mandat d'un parlementaire, c'est de mettre de l'eau sur le feu et non de l'huile sur le feu. Nous avons une obligation morale de trouver des solutions, de régler le problème à l'amiable comme les gens nous ont mandatés de le faire. Ce genre de crise émotionnelle-là, de prendre un marteau pour tuer les espoirs de négociations, je condamne ça très sévèrement. Ce n'est pas le temps. Ce n'est pas le moment. Ce n'est pas la façon de faire les choses.

1150

Il y a un paysagiste justement dans l'est de l'Ontario qui a pris son camion, qui a acheté des produits au Québec, qui s'est rendu à Montréal pour se faire remettre une amende de quelque 800 \$ parce qu'il n'avait pas acheté son essence au Québec, parce qu'il n'avait pas la taxe au Québec, parce qu'il n'avait pas un permis du Québec, parce que lui avait pris son propre véhicule commercial à lui pour aller chercher des produits fabriqués au Québec. Je trouve ce genre de situation-là

complètement anormale et à corriger et à éliminer.

Je viens d'entendre mon collègue de Carleton qui dit : «Pourquoi est-ce qu'on veut taper sur le Québec ? Parce que les États-Unis puis le Mexique vont mieux nous traiter que le Québec.» Quelle chose absolument absurde que d'utiliser ce genre de langage-là. J'espère qu'entre Mexicains, Canadiens, Américains, Ontariens et Québécois, on va être capables de trouver des mécanismes de bonne entente entre voisins au sein de la même famille, plutôt que de proposer et dire qu'on va être mieux traités par les Mexicains et par les Américains que par les Québécois. Ça, c'est vraiment ajouter de l'huile sur le feu.

La solution, ce n'est pas le protectionnisme. Ce n'est pas la «retaliation». Ce n'est pas oeil pour oeil, dent pour dent, la solution. La solution, c'est de libérer, de dialoguer : de libérer les échanges, et je suis convaincu que le moment est malheureusement tardif, mais il est arrivé, le moment de régler la situation.

Éliminer les barrières interprovinciales, c'est essentiel. Au moment où on se parle, on me dit qu'il y a plus de 500 barrières aux échanges commerciaux interprovinciaux — complètement ridicules, mais ça va être éliminé. Il faut favoriser le libre mouvement des personnes, des services et des biens, peut importe la province au Canada, sans égard à l'origine des gens qui veulent travailler au Canada. Ces barrières interprovinciales sont complètement ridicules, non nécessaires, exagérées et elles vont disparaître.

The solution is to dialogue, to negotiate, yes, to talk harder, to put the dealings on the table, but to resolve them in a parliamentary fashion, in a diplomatic fashion, from member to another member of this Canadian Confederation, and we are doing that and it's happening.

I want to support this type of resolution from my colleague the member for Carleton East—

Interjections: Ottawa East.

M. Poirier : —to make sure that we continue and get the results we want, and it's not to hammer away, as is proposed by certain other of my colleagues, that we will resolve it this way.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I am pleased to have this opportunity to say a few words today on this resolution. It's a fairly long one, but there are parts in it I'll just read:

"The purpose of breaking down existing barriers... therefore the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs should take steps, including setting up discussions with the minister's Quebec counterpart, so that the positive initiatives undertaken at the regional level can be followed up at the provincial level at the earliest possible opportunity."

The resolution is much the same as that of my colleague the member for Carleton last Thursday, where he had an interprovincial trade resolution brought before

this Legislature and it passed. I'm pleased to see today that the member Mr Grandmaître has brought this resolution forward to have further debate on it.

It's important to know the discussion that's been taking place in this Legislature last week and this week, and I often wonder how many people in Ontario realize the barriers there are between provinces in Canada, far more barriers than I ever anticipated until the discussions started some time ago, and then, when the discussions were taking place with regard to the Constitution debate, I think more people became aware of the barriers that we have between provinces at that stage than ever before.

It's a barrier that has been brought to my attention in my local riding with regard to contracts that have been let out, with regard to the availability of the construction industry and the people from Quebec being able to come to Ontario to work and to secure jobs here in the construction industry.

I know there's a large contract in our riding that was let with regard to fencing, and it was a large group from Quebec that came and put up all these fences along the 400 highway. It was brought to my attention by people within my riding saying: "How can this happen? Why is it that we're not allowed to be able to go to the province of Quebec and to be able to get contracts?" It has been brought to my attention from people who live near the boundary, the Ottawa River, with regard to them being able to go over the bridge to get work.

We've got to have competitive competition. My colleague mentioned, with regard to the trade barrier, that it costs Canadians about \$6.5 billion annually. That amounts to \$1,000 for every family of four.

We talk about the approximately 500 barriers to international trade and we look at the studies that have been done. It's easier to do business with the United States than it is to do business with the province of Quebec.

We have the provincial government procurement policies, standards and regulations, provincial licensing requirements and regulations that differ between provinces. We have the distribution restrictions. We have different pricing policies and the marketing boards. These barriers have a serious impact on everything from food processing, construction, telecommunications, transportation, banking and health care products to beer and wine. There are many problems with the barriers to interprovincial trade which negatively affect the efficiency and competitiveness of this province. The basis of the resolution is to do away with those barriers.

I often wonder, as many people have always wondered, how come they were put there in the first place? Why have we had these barriers between the provinces in Canada? I cannot understand it. However, I think these resolutions that have been brought forward last

week and this week are bringing it to the people of the province and, I hope, to the minister so that she will negotiate to try to find a way to get rid of the barriers between provinces.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): In the very few seconds that I have left, I'm going to support this resolution tomorrow, because as many of you will know, I represent a district that has a lot of—

Mr Grandmaître: Today, Tony.

Mr Perruzza: Today, today, I'm going to support it today, you're absolutely right. I have a constituency that has a lot of construction workers who are out of work.

I have the Montreal Gazette dated Tuesday, May 4, and I see Quebec Hydro here, its tenders: Eligibility, it reads, place of business, in Quebec. The list continues right through: McGill University, same kind of thing. So if you're a Quebec construction company you can work in Quebec, if you're a Quebec construction company you can come and work in Ontario, but if you're an Ontario company you can't go to work in Quebec. That, to me, doesn't seem to be fair at all.

That's why I'm going to support the resolution. We need some fairness now, not 15 years down the road. We need it today.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): It occurs to me, as we address this issue, that we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that these are difficult economic times. Difficult economic times can breed despair, can lead to people seeking to lash out in a visceral response to difficulties before them, but I think it's incumbent upon us as elected representatives to show some real leadership in this regard, and that is, in this particular matter, not to appeal to baser instincts which would have us lash out and implement some type of punitive response to the difficulties our constituents are facing.

I think much more appropriate, in these circumstances, is to explore all possible avenues prior to entering into or undertaking punitive action. In this particular case, that has not been fully explored.

One of the things I would ask is that the Minister of Labour undertake to enter into negotiations specific to this issue. I understand that the government is about to undertake, in the month of June, some broader-based discussions with its provincial counterparts and the federal government, which have as their end to remove some of the interprovincial trade barriers. That simply isn't adequate, given the circumstances that we face in the Ottawa-Carleton area, and I would ask the government to undertake negotiations specific to these particular issues and that those commence at the earliest possible opportunity.

Certainly, one option that I could offer is that the government may very well consider exempting Ottawa-Carleton from the punitive interprovincial construction trade barrier that exists at the present time.

Mr Grandmaître: This is a family portrait. This is the Ottawa-Carleton caucus, and I'm very pleased that they're all supporting my resolution. I can assure you that it feels great when all three parties are on side on a resolution. I haven't seen this in this House for a number of months.

Mr Morin: Except for the member for Carleton.

Mr Grandmaître: Except for the member for Carleton. I'll be addressing the comments of the member for Carleton. I think fighting fire with fire is the wrong attitude. He exposed the same attitude last Thursday by wanting to close the interprovincial bridge's right of way, but I can't—

Mr Sterling: Why didn't you vote against it? Why didn't you come in and vote?

Mr Grandmaître: Will you bring the member for Carleton to order? Can you bring him to order? He's so short, I can't see him when he's sitting down.

But anyway, I want to remind the member for Carleton that we have to work to resolve our interprovincial barriers. I think it's very, very unfair for the member for Carleton saying these kinds of things, for the simple reason that we are trying to create not only an attitude, not only to resolve our differences, but to work together.

As pointed out earlier, we do have free trade with the US and we're working on free trade with Mexico, and I think we should have free trade among our provinces. That's number one. But the federal Tories never thought it was important. It was much better to do business with the US and Mexico and forget about interprovincial barriers.

The Acting Speaker: The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): We will deal first with ballot item 7 standing in the name of Mr Huget. If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

Mr Huget has moved private member's resolution 7. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): We will deal next with ballot item 8 standing in the name of M. Grandmaître. If any members are opposed to a vote on this ballot item, will they please rise.

M. Grandmaître has moved private member's resolution 8. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Interjections: Carried.

The Acting Speaker: Carried.

Interjection: No.

The Acting Speaker: I'm sorry?

Mr Villeneuve: The Liberals said no. I can't believe this. The Liberals said no.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say "aye."

Those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1203 to 1208.

The Acting Speaker: I'd ask the members to please take their seats.

Mr Grandmaître has moved private member's notice of motion number 5. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing.

Ayes

Abel, Arnott, Bisson, Bradley, Brown, Callahan, Carter, Chiarelli, Cooper, Dadamo, Daigeler, Duignan, Frankford, Grandmaître, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Hope, Huget, Jackson, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Klopp, Kormos, Kwinter, Malkowski, Marchese;

Martin, McGuinty, McLean, Miclash, Mills, Morin, Morrow, North, O'Connor, O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau), Owens, Perruzza, Poirier, Runciman, Sterling, Stockwell, Sutherland, Tilson, Villeneuve, Waters, Wessenger, Wilson (Simcoe West), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Winninger, Wiseman, Witmer, Wood.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing.

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 56; the nays are 0.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes being 56 and the nays being 0, I declare the motion carried.

All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, I do now leave the chair and House will resume at 1:30 of the clock.

The House recessed at 1212.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1330.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS
CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): The Bob Rae-Mike Harris expenditure control program was presented to this Legislature April 23. The expenditure control program was wholeheartedly supported by Mike Harris with the only proviso that—

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I believe there is not a quorum present.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Count the members, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Speaker: Would you kindly reset the time at 1:30. The member may wish to start over.

Mr Brown: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and thank you to the government for finally showing up.

The Bob Rae-Mike Harris expenditure program was presented to the Legislature April 23. The expenditure control program was wholeheartedly supported by Mike Harris with the only proviso that it did not go far enough. The program announced a 20% operating cut to conservation authorities and eliminated the conservation land tax rebate.

The conservation authorities of Ontario protect our watersheds. The Sewell commission on planning suggests more watershed planning. The protection, restoration and management functions of conservation authorities will, however, be severely impacted this operating year. The cuts will translate to a 46% decrease to some authorities. Nine to ten authorities are presently considering selling significant wetlands and forests in order to offset the crisis and chaos the Rae government has created. These lands were often purchased with private donations and help from groups like the Bruce Trail Association and the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

The authorities cannot afford to pay the municipal taxes. This is just one more step towards the creation of a huge environmental deficit by this government. I ask Mr Rae and his government to give serious consideration to the environment and rethink the fairness and priorities of these cuts.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): Three years ago the Rotary Centre in Kitchener, which helps some 1,200 children and their families every year, obtained approval from the Ministry of Health for

construction of a new children's treatment centre for the disabled children of Waterloo region and Wellington county. To date, the ministry has failed to deliver on the promised funding for this centre.

The excessive delay in obtaining the approved funding has created tremendous uncertainty in my community as well as creating serious problems for the Rotary Centre. Some of the 600-plus donors are now withholding or questioning their financial pledges for this project, and 10 service clubs are anxiously awaiting the commencement of this project to which they have already contributed over \$600,000.

In addition, fire, safety and maintenance problems with the existing centre are creating dilemmas about the spending of public funds to upgrade a building which the Rotary Centre expects to vacate soon.

I urge the Minister of Health to recognize the significant problems which her delay in making a decision—a three-year delay—is creating, and take immediate action, please, to ensure that the new children's treatment centre becomes a reality in the very near future. The children and their families have waited long enough for a commitment which was made to them almost three years ago.

JUNIOR HOCKEY

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): My constituency, Sault Ste Marie, has been honoured as the host of the Canadian junior hockey championships, the Memorial Cup. The Memorial Cup will start this year on May 14 and end May 23.

As host of this prestigious event, Sault Ste Marie will represent the country and the province of Ontario. Sault Ste Marie is very proud of this opportunity and, most important, ecstatic that our own local hockey team, the Soo Greyhounds, are again in a position to win the national junior championships this year, for the third time.

We must give recognition to the city and the Soo Greyhounds for their relentless efforts to bring the Memorial Cup to the Sault. The economic spinoff of the event will be tremendous to all of us who work and live in Sault Ste Marie.

I am also honoured to have the Premier come to the Sault to help kick off the festivities. Most importantly, Bob Rae and the provincial government have pitched in up to \$87,000 to help with the renovations and upgrading the Memorial Gardens, the site of the Memorial Cup. This grant comes from the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation to help assist the community to make this cross-Canada event worthwhile. The NDP government's investment in the city of Sault Ste Marie will certainly be appreciated.

I want to take this opportunity to invite all of you to

watch the Memorial Cup as Ontario represents this country in a sport loved by all Canadians. This is another proud moment for us in the Sault. Congratulations, and go, Hounds, go.

REST HOMES

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): In November 1990 a coroner's inquiry into the death of a resident in an unregulated boarding home prompted the government to appoint a provincial commission to inquire into unregulated residential homes in the province.

In December of that year, Ernie Lightman was appointed to undertake the study. On June 24, 1992, Elaine Ziemba, Minister of Citizenship, tabled the report of the Commission of Inquiry into Unregulated Residential Accommodation.

The report highlighted the fact that 47,500 vulnerable adults, most of whom are persons with developmental disabilities, psychiatric histories or senior citizens, live in unregulated settings, defined as such because there are no provincial licensing, standards or inspections, nor are there any other viable projections for the lives and wellbeing of these residents.

The Lightman report made numerous positive recommendations, such as a bill of rights for rest home residents. However, the government has yet to act on any of the 148 recommendations that will enhance the living conditions of the marginalized people within our community who deserve the right to live in dignity.

I challenge the Minister of Citizenship to act on the recommendations, instead of allowing this report, like many others that are now sitting in the ministry, to gather dust on the shelf. I hope that the minister reacts to that immediately.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): On April 23 the Treasurer announced a change in the definition of "full-time student" from 150 minutes a day to 210 minutes a day. This change will have significant impact on the management of programs and staffing in our secondary schools. The announcement came after school boards had negotiated teachers' salaries, staff levels, programs and mill rates. School boards, principals and teachers were not consulted about this change prior to the announcement.

Minister, we support an effort to streamline our school system. Taxpayers believe that ways must be found to reduce the size of bureaucracy and eliminate the costly duplication of services. Your government promised consultation and partnerships. Management decisions such as the definition of "full-time student" need to be communicated in a timely fashion to allow school boards, administrators, teachers, students and taxpayers to modify programs, timetables and staffing in a responsible manner.

Phasing in of major changes in program and funding

changes is responsible, if in fact they are phased in and communicated in a timely fashion. Changing the rules in the middle of the game is unacceptable in any place of work. In education, front-line workers and consumers—that's teachers and students—not to speak of taxpayers, have lost confidence in this government's ability to manage and communicate.

1340

ROSE OF DURHAM

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I'm pleased to rise today to tell you about a community agency in Durham region, an agency that strives to break the cycles of poverty, abuse, neglect and powerlessness for young teenaged parents and their children. The agency I speak of is the Rose of Durham.

Here with us today are Nick Barber, from the board of directors, and Laurel Hamilton, the executive director of that agency. Thank you very much for coming.

By providing support, counselling and referral services, the Rose of Durham reaches out to the vulnerable teenaged parents and their children from throughout the region of Durham. While adhering to the principles of Children First, the Rose of Durham is committed to filling the needs of these young people, many of whom come from fractured families and have experienced the effects of alcoholism, physical and sexual abuse, violence, poverty, illiteracy and social isolation.

The Rose of Durham works in conjunction with virtually every other major social service agency and network in Durham, providing life skills training, educational opportunities and referrals.

The Rose of Durham enjoys the endorsement of the mayors of the towns of Whitby and Newcastle and the city of Oshawa as well as those of my colleagues here from the region of Durham.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to acquaint you and the House with this most valuable of community resources.

SARAH McLAUGHLIN

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): When political leaders offer a blunt message and a simple solution to the financial woes of a province to gain media attention and score political points, they do so at the expense of Sarah McLaughlin and all other vulnerable children in our society.

In a letter to me, Sarah's parents say the following:

"Sarah is a 19-month-old deaf-blind developmentally delayed child. She has infantile spasms which are a severe form of epileptic seizures. Last year she was experiencing 50 to 100 seizures per day. She is also microcephalic, which means her head and brain are smaller than normal, and possibly she is mentally handicapped.

"I do realize the drastic cuts in funding to all the programs; however, I find this totally unacceptable....

"How are parents going to teach their children adequately and cope with the pressure and stress of their needs without any hands-on intervention in their home? We are not looking for babysitting; we are looking for support to help teach our child. She can only see and hear through someone else....

"Nine hours per week is only touching the surface. We are requesting 20 hours per week, which is not really very much when you consider her requirements....

"Mr Bradley, Sarah's seizures are now controlled and with all the added intervention she is progressing and developing. Please help us help our daughter. She has so much potential. Let's not take that away from her. We are striving to help her be as independent and functional as possible. Her life is just as valuable as that of any other child."

Indeed.

POLICE WEEK

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): This is National Police Week, and I'd like to make a few brief comments. I've been waiting all week for a statement from the Solicitor General acknowledging this important week, but he has failed to comment. I suppose that's not surprising, given the nasty anti-police comments made last year by the Premier's parliamentary assistant and the Premier's own actions and words in implying racist motives to police actions and refusing police officers an audience while at the same time hurriedly meeting with vocal interest groups whenever they called.

Unlike this NDP government and its Liberal predecessors, we in the Ontario Conservative Party are strongly supportive of the thousands of men and women in blue who perform so magnificently day in and day out on our behalf, facing tremendous odds and unbelievable scrutiny. Despite the critical comments emanating from Liberals, NDPers, vocal pressure groups and certain elements in the media, the vast majority of Ontario residents are proud of our police officers and thankful for the outstanding job they do under very difficult circumstances. Congratulations, National Police Week. We're with you. Keep up the good work.

MOTORCYCLES

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I rise today to inform the House of an issue that directly affects 165,000 residents of Ontario: motorcycle safety and awareness.

With each passing year, more and more residents of this province are riding motorcycles or mopeds, but they face a hidden danger, other motorists. Last year alone, 55 motorcyclists and nine passengers were killed on the highways and byways of Ontario, many after colliding with cars and trucks. Add to that number 2,183 injuries to motorcycle drivers and 487 to passengers.

A good number of these deaths and injuries could

have been prevented if more motorists were in the habit of looking twice before entering intersections and if more bikers had taken motorcycle safety courses. This is why the Bikers Rights of Ontario, a non-profit group dedicated to responsible motorcycle legislation, wants the province to raise motorcycle safety awareness by declaring May of each year as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.

Two weeks ago, myself and the member for Lincoln, both of us motorcycle enthusiasts, sponsored a bikers' rights rally here at Queen's Park. Many of you will recall the enthusiastic showing of bikers in front of the Legislative Building. Many of these motorcycle enthusiasts signed petitions which have since been presented to the House, petitions asking the province to officially declare May as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.

On behalf of the 165,000 licensed motorcycle riders of Ontario, I would ask that the Premier consider officially proclaiming May as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month throughout the province of Ontario.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

HIGHWAY SAFETY

SÉCURITÉ ROUTIÈRE

Hon Gilles Pouliot (Minister of Transportation):

Last week in the House I announced that the government is proceeding with the introduction of a system of graduated licensing for new drivers.

Ce système est une importante initiative qui s'inscrit dans le cadre de la vision du gouvernement. Cette vision rendra les routes de l'Ontario les plus sécuritaires en Amérique du Nord. Aujourd'hui, nous franchissons une étape de plus vers cet objectif.

As Minister of Transportation and on behalf of my colleagues from the ministries of the Attorney General, the Solicitor General and Correctional Services I am announcing a six-point integrated safety project using advanced technology to make Ontario's roads safer by reducing speeding and ensuring that all drivers obey our traffic laws.

One unifying theme of these measures I am announcing today is that each uses the most modern technology to ensure that drivers will obey the speed limit on Ontario roads, reducing highway deaths and injuries significantly.

The six measures include:

— Photo radar, a system that has been used successfully in other jurisdictions in the United States and in Europe. Photo radar cameras photograph the licence plates of speeding vehicles. Virtually all speeding vehicles are captured by the camera; police are not required to chase speeders. The speeding ticket and photo are then mailed to the vehicle owner.

A six-month photo radar pilot project is set to begin in January 1994. Of course, it will be preceded by a

campaign to raise public awareness and change driver behaviour.

— At the same time, we will begin a pilot project to test in-car computerwork stations in Ontario Provincial Police patrols, linking officers in the field to an integrated telecommunications network.

— The workstations will be even more effective with the introduction of magnetic stripe, machine-readable drivers' licences in the spring of 1994, which will reduce driver's licence fraud and save administrative time for police.

— We will rebuild our existing system for collecting and analysing collision data to provide better, more timely information to help us improve the condition and design of our roads and, of course, to help our driver and vehicle programs.

— A centralized database for collection of fine payments currently being phased in will mean more efficient processing.

— Finally, we will streamline our court processes to make courts more accessible and more efficient.

Nous savons que la vitesse est un facteur important dans les collisions et aussi dans les décès, et qu'elle constitue les deux tiers des accusations portées en vertu du Code de la route. Un décès sur six est causé par l'excès de vitesse.

In 1991 alone, more than 1,100 people lost their lives on the roads of Ontario. More than 90,000 people were injured due to collision, and yes, Mr Speaker, more than 213,000 accidents took place on the 23,000 kilometres of roads and the 3,000 bridges across our province. Part of our vision is to make the roads of Ontario the safest in North America.

The cost of speeding in terms of pain and suffering, health care and lost productivity is indeed staggering. We all have a moral obligation to increase safety. This is why this government is moving aggressively to address speeding. By introducing these measures as a joint project of all ministries responsible for provincial road safety, justice and law enforcement, we are moving in partnership towards a safer Ontario and a more efficient and equitable justice system.

1350

Ma collègue la procureure générale et moi-même présenterons bientôt une loi afin de modifier le Code de la route et la Loi sur les infractions provinciales qui permettra d'aller de l'avant avec ces projets.

Au nom de la procureure générale et du solliciteur général et ministre des Services correctionnels, j'ai le plaisir d'annoncer que le gouvernement a l'intention de mettre en oeuvre ce programme. Je suis sûr que tous les partis travailleront de concert afin que cette loi soit adoptée dans les plus brefs délais.

I have every confidence that all parties will work together to see this legislation passed without delay.

Saving lives by improving road safety is a goal and a responsibility we all share.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Responses?

Mr Hans Daigeler (Nepean): Well, I must say I'm pleased that the Minister of Transportation is at least making a statement in the House. Mind you, it's a statement that really, as do his previous statements, announces something that will happen many years down the road, because this is a pilot project that requires changes in legislation, so it will not happen tomorrow. But, Minister, thank you for at least announcing it in the House and not, like your other cabinet colleagues, going all over the place and avoiding this Legislature.

However, this morning, I must say, at the press conference, the minister wasn't there just himself; he had two of his cabinet colleagues there, and I was wondering why they were there. Perhaps they were trying to give him assistance to answer all the questions from the press, but I think what they were there for is to send him off to Spain, because I understand that the minister is off to a conference in Spain next week.

Minister, you're going there to an international road conference. Let me give you two messages on your trip to Spain. First of all, Minister, don't get photographed with a dead bull in front of you like Mulroney did with the boars. That's the first warning that I give you. But the second one, which is much more important: Minister, yes, we want the safest roads here in Ontario. But, Minister, don't use the Mike Harris approach of more police, more enforcement, more laws. Use the Liberal approach of more roads, of better roads, of improving the roads, because that's what's killing the people, that our road network is clogged, and that's why people are speeding.

I refer you to Highway 16 in eastern Ontario, my own area. The minister is well aware of the terrible accidents that have happened there only recently. And, Minister, speeding in most of these accidents was not the problem. It's that people were trying to pass and, unfortunately, not following the rules, because there's only a two-lane highway leading into the nation's capital.

Minister, if you would go ahead with this road, as promised—and I'm using the 416 as an example—you would be avoiding all the terrible accident situations that you are concerned about. It's not through the police, it's not through these gadgets and gizmos—as you mentioned yourselves this morning, because I was listening to your press conference—that you're going to save lives; it's through better roads, it's through roads that will provide the transportation needs for the people in this province.

You announced a major Jobs Ontario project on February 8. I'm wondering what has happened since then. Minister, I was hoping that you would come in here in this House and talk about the major capital

infrastructure projects that are needed for the traffic improvements in this province but are also needed to get the economy going again in this province. That's what we're hoping for.

Minister, okay, I appreciate your making this announcement about some pilot projects that will perhaps cut down on speeding, and on principle I think that's okay. But what we're really wanting from you are announcements about new roads, announcements about the subways, that they're going ahead, that we see a shovel in the ground, that you employ workers again, the unemployed in this province, to give them hope again. And, Minister, to build roads, to build infrastructure, that's the way to bring back hope. I hope the Treasurer is listening as well, and I certainly do hope that in his budget next week we will have good news in terms of roads, good news in terms of subways, good news also in terms of the Red Hill Creek Expressway. We haven't heard anything about that major project that is missing in Hamilton, and if that project were going ahead, there would be a lot of activity and a lot of employment right there in Hamilton, and with Hamilton and Toronto and many other parts of the province.

Minister, when are we going to hear from you about the real needs of the people, and that's jobs, that's building new roads and building the infrastructure that we need in this province?

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): The things that have to be solved, I tell the minister, are Highway 403 in the Mississauga area and the Hamilton area, which, by their construction, are causing real problems. This is going to produce a cash cow for the minister and I suggest that he concentrate his efforts on getting the bad drivers off the roads, particularly those who weave in and out of lanes and those who drive dangerously.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I am forced to comment on the Liberal Transportation critic's comments about this junket to Spain, which I know the Minister of Transportation has been somewhat sensitive about all week. I'm reminded of Mr Peterson's junket to Italy shortly before the last election, which cost the taxpayers some \$310,000 for a nine-day trip. I don't think it was a terribly good investment. Apparently, neither did the electorate.

But let's just speak about this announcement. The PC Party has always been at the forefront of pushing safety measures and we are certainly pleased that the minister is thinking about improving the safety on the roads of this province. However, there are of course a few comments that we have about how he is proceeding.

It seems that this crumbling administration is grasping at straws, trying to bring out some decent announcements, which are very premature. We see that the implementation of this is to begin the pilot project in January of next year, but there will be a four-year implementation schedule. The minister doesn't mention this.

On the subject that he announced earlier this week of graduated licences, yesterday I went back to him and said, "Minister, why don't you move up the timetable on graduated licences, because that is a practical solution that could stop the carnage on the roads this summer?" I suggested in question period yesterday that he should bring at least first and second reading, preferably also third reading, of that bill forward before the summer recess.

The minister gave his usual bafflegab and I asked for a late show, which was to be tonight. I've been informed by the minister's aides that he will not be attending. He's going to be having drinks with his federal counterpart. Apparently, that is more important than moving forward legislation in this province.

There is no detailed cost that has been provided by the minister as to what this program is going to cost, I guess because the announcement is so premature. What we do know is that each unit is going to cost \$80,000 and the workstations are going to be some \$50,000. That's \$250,000.

My question to the minister is, does he intend to increase fines? Recently, in a private conversation it was suggested by the OPP that in a test in Orillia it was estimated that within a very short period of time, just from the tests where they studied it, they could raise \$80,000 on a particular site in Orillia. This, Minister, is just a tax grab. Don't call it anything else; we know what you're doing.

So far as licensing is concerned, you are not moving on the things you should be doing, and that is quick implementation of graduated licences, and when we look at the technology of—

Interjection.

Mr Turnbull: I see the member there from somewhere east of Toronto needs his medication changed once again.

The Speaker: Would the member for Durham East come to order, please.

Mr Turnbull: Minister, magnetic strip technology is useful, but I ask you, why does this same government not move forward with technology to stop the abuse of the health care system, which, according to a secret report by the Ministry of Health, is costing some \$700 million a year to the taxpayers of this province? Why is this government not using that technology for money which can save the taxpayers, but instead is moving forward with a massive tax grab?

1400

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I have a couple of concerns with the announcement today. One first concern is that in announcements such as these, these particular pilot projects are not put in spots which, I would suggest, are dangerous areas or high-traffic or high-accident areas. They tend to become specifically

revenue generators for the government. They pass off this revenue generation on the premise that they're saving people's lives.

From municipalities on up, it's treated as a method to generate revenue for the coffers, under the guise of protecting the drivers of Ontario. If it were truly the case, many other alternatives could be taken that would save far more lives, be far more beneficial. But the one caveat is, those particular announcements aren't made because they don't generate any revenue. That's the most important part of this announcement: more money from the taxpayers, in areas that are not necessarily dangerous but can create a lot of money, and that's why I am very cynical.

There are a lot of other concerns I have about people driving cars that are rented cars and so on. Who's going to pay the bill for those speeders? Is it going to be the companies in the province of Ontario who have to come forward with the dollars? I don't think this is well-thought-out.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired. Would the honourable member please take his seat.

ORAL QUESTIONS

LABOUR RELATIONS

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My first question today is to the Treasurer, and it concerns the social contract and expenditure controls of the current government.

Mr Treasurer, you will recall that it's three weeks ago that you and your colleague the Premier announced to the province what your social contract and expenditure control program would involve. Just to quickly refresh one's memory, you said three weeks ago as a government that in this fiscal year you wanted, among other things, a \$2.4-billion expenditure reduction and you wanted a \$2-billion reduction in the public sector payroll in this fiscal year. Those were two clear commitments that you gave two and a half, three weeks ago. Since that time, you've indicated that the social contract talks must end no later than June 4.

Now, I want to simply ask the Treasurer this: In the last few days, we have seen an ongoing discussion down at the Royal York where, yesterday, there weren't even enough chairs to seat all of the participants; the individuals can't even agree on the agenda. Mr Treasurer, Mr Minister of Finance, how can you expect the people of Ontario to have any confidence in this process given the chaos and the uncertainty which seems to abound everywhere as we move forward to your budget next week?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): The talks are going well. I should say to the deputy leader for the day for the official opposition that I really do believe there is cause for optimism. Keep in mind that we are sailing in uncharted waters in our attempt to

negotiate with the public sector, so I think that to expect that it would all be smooth sailing simply would not be realistic. The government's chief negotiator has said on several occasions that he expected it to be difficult. I recall saying myself, as this whole process began, that I expected that there'd be some very difficult times, there'd be some very strong things said, there'd be a lot of excessive rhetoric used and that we should all put that in perspective because this is the first time that this has ever been tried.

So I am still optimistic. This morning the government's chief negotiator, Mr Decter, went back to the table and presented the leadership of the public sector unions with a response to what they had given to us last Friday. It seems to me that's the way negotiations should work.

Mr Conway: What we do know is that time is passing. Today is May 13. We are six weeks into a fiscal year where the government has said it wants to reduce its expenditures and those of its partners by billions of dollars. As the violins play, as the fires of this budgetary crisis lick ever closer to the heart of the government, young doctors know the problems, students are about to be told that they are going to get only conditional approvals for admission to colleges and universities within a few months, senior citizens are about to be told that programs they rely on are going to change quickly and significantly, and the Treasurer is sitting here imagining that this chaos down at the Royal York is a chaos without a price. For young doctors, for senior citizens, for students, for everyone in this province this chaos has a price.

Surely the Treasurer must understand that we are now six weeks into the fiscal year, and he has set clearly the fiscal framework. What kind of signal are you sending to the people of Ontario and to the financial community as they have to watch daily a process where people are not talking about the main issues, they can't find chairs, and they don't even agree on the agenda? What kind of signal, what kind of leadership is that?

Hon Mr Laughren: I don't know why the member for Renfrew North insists on putting the worst conceivable light on what's going on with these talks.

The public sector unions now have our response to each of their proposals which they gave to us. They will be meeting on the weekend, it's my understanding, and then next week it's our hope that many of those proposals, which must be dealt with at the sectoral tables rather than at one common table—that that process will get under way next week.

I am very much aware of the pressures of time, very much aware of that and concerned about it, but I think not to have these very tight time constrictions and pressures would not be appropriate either. I don't think the member for Renfrew North is just saying, "Just leave the time frame open ended." I don't think he's saying that.

I am not sure what he's implying should be done, but it seems to me that what we're trying to do is to give the negotiations every opportunity to work, keeping in mind, first of all, that we've said there's a deadline on negotiations of June 4, and secondly, that the budget that will be brought down next week will take into account the almost \$4 billion in expenditure reductions and the \$2 billion that's on the social contract table, along with the third leg of the stool, as we're referring to it: a revenue package.

Things are unfolding. Of course there's pressures of time. I expected that right from the beginning.

Mr Conway: Things are moving on, absolutely. CBC Radio news reported at 1 o'clock today that, for example, the township of Atikokan has today decided to lay off a number of municipal staff, to go to a four-day work week, because they are very concerned about the fact that their provincial grants are off by about \$200,000. They do not want to raise taxes, so they have decided to lay people off. They've laid off their recreation director, they've laid off a number of people in their public works department, and they are determined to try to keep their tax increase to a minimal or zero level. But they've had to do that; they have today gone to a four-day work week. They are typical of everyone else in this province who cannot wait for this chaotic business at the Royal York to come to some conclusion two or three or four weeks from now, well into this fiscal year.

Given what we've heard today at Atikokan, would it not be more sensible for the government to do this: that the government would turn its attention to a more limited process, where it would deal with its own employees and its own program to come to some resolution and allow the other sectors, the hospitals, the municipalities and the others, to proceed by way of sectoral negotiations to, within the clear fiscal framework the Treasurer outlined three weeks ago, work out their best solution within those sectors? Would that not be a better way to proceed than to try to do a kind of Charlottetown accord that is clearly not working?

Hon Mr Laughren: That is very, very close to what we are attempting to do. That's why we said it was important to have the sectoral tables. We have no objections to a common table where the public sector would bring proposals to us as a common group, but I do believe that the solution in the long run will be found, by and large, at the sectoral tables, because that's where the specifics need to be debated with the public sector. One cannot exclude the people who deliver the services. They know best about where efficiencies can be achieved.

I understand the concern by members of the assembly and others, but I think that out in the public at large there's an understanding that what this government is trying to do is tackle a serious problem that, quite

frankly, no other government in this province has ever even tried to achieve, and we are.

1410

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question.

Mr Conway: Sid Ryan and Liz Barkley are down at the Royal York this moment saying they want to talk about the revenue side that the government doesn't want to talk to them about. They're not even talking about the main issues—

The Speaker: Is this the member's second question?

Mr Conway: —of your statement of April 23, and we're halfway through your six-week cycle. Get real, because the people and the taxpayers expect their interests to be protected.

Mr Speaker, my second question to the Minister of Finance—

The Speaker: The honourable member should know better. Would he now place his second question.

Mr Conway: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and that is a fair encouragement.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): A very few days ago, the Ontario government released a major report on youth employment in Ontario in 1993, and tragically, the Ontario government report just released indicates that young people in this province are going to face very, very difficult job prospects, particularly in the summer of 1993.

Based in part on predictions from the Conference Board of Canada that have changed just in the last 24 hours, the Ontario government report indicates that youth unemployment this summer will be in the neighbourhood of 19%. My question to the Treasurer is, what kind of social contract does the Rae government plan for young people across this province, who are increasingly concerned about hope and opportunity in this province of theirs?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): There is no question whatsoever that youth unemployment is going to be a problem in this province this year, as it was last year and was the year before. What we have decided to do is put more money into youth employment programs than has ever been spent in this province before. That's a commitment to the youth of this province, and we're determined to deliver that.

I appreciate the fact that there's high youth unemployment. I don't think, however, that the member for Renfrew North is implying that we can absorb the entire youth unemployment with government programs. I think that would be unrealistic, and I hope he's not implying that we could spend that kind of money on youth employment programs this summer. But we are spending more than has ever before been spent on youth employment in this province.

Mr Conway: I recommend that all honourable members read this report, because it is a very, very worrisome report from the government of Ontario, and it's just released.

Young people look to this government and they see the government listening to Sid Ryan and Mr Upshaw and Ms Barkley. Boy, when those people talk, the government appears to listen, but the young people are asking, "What's being done for us?"

You know, I just did some checking about some of the employers in this province. Last year the Toronto General Hospital offered some 200 summer employment opportunities; this year they are offering none. Quaker Oats in Peterborough last year offered 13 student employment opportunities; this year they will be hiring two. Last year the Labatt's brewery in Waterloo hired between 35 and 40 people, and this year they will be hiring none because they've gone out of business.

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): Last year General Motors hired none; this year 800.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Durham Centre.

Mr Conway: My question, Treasurer, is, what hope and what commitment are you prepared to make to the tens of thousands of young people coming out of school or out of work, as we speak, as they look for hope and opportunity in Ontario in 1993?

Hon Mr Laughren: I would not want the member for Renfrew North to leave the impression that we're not doing a great deal for youth unemployment in this province.

For the year we've just concluded, and then many of these programs spin over into 1993-94: for example, on Jobs Ontario Youth, over \$13 million, over 5,500 participants; summer Experience, \$8.5 million, 3,500 participants; the Environmental Youth Corps, \$10.9 million, 3,000 participants; northern Ontario training opportunities, \$3.5 million, 1,600 participants.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): All those kids out of work. They really have jobs, do they, Floyd?

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I could go on. That's only half the list.

We are spending about \$180 million on youth employment programs. Of course, it'll never be enough to employ all the unemployed youth in this province. We understand that. We understand as well that the official opposition simply wants to spend more, more, more on every conceivable program there is in the province. We're not prepared to do that.

Mr Conway: Let it be clear where this member stands: I am prepared to spend money on young people. I'm getting a little ticked off at the commitment you're

prepared to make to some of your friends, many of them the best-off people in this province in relative terms. The deal I want for the young people of this province is the deal that you've been prepared to make over the last few years for some of your friends, who've done relatively well in tough times.

My question to this government is, are you prepared to make any kind of a social contract for these young people, who are facing some of the toughest times that I've seen in this province in a generation?

The Treasurer talks about his report. Let me read this report just released and what the government's report says, and I quote but one sentence. "While there will be an increase in the number of jobs, there will also be an increase in the number of young people in the labour force competing for those jobs, and furthermore, young people will be facing competition for those jobs from older workers who are being laid off during this cyclical downturn."

Today in Atikokan young people are going to be competing with people who have just lost their jobs with the municipality because the government has not been able to manage public sector expenditures over the last 18 months.

The Speaker: Could the member place a question, please.

Mr Conway: My question to the Treasurer: We've been talking to people in the public sector. I think of the Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority, which we were told last week had no problem with the release of funds.

The Speaker: Would the member please place a question.

Mr Conway: Today they say they do not yet have the funds to hire the few students this year they want to offer jobs to. Will you, Mr Treasurer, give us a commitment that the funds for the available summer placements will be released forthwith?

Hon Mr Laughren: I hope that the member for Renfrew North would understand that one of the reasons we have gone through this very painful exercise of finding \$4 billion in expenditure reductions, and why we want and insist on finding \$2 billion at the social contract table, is so that we can protect jobs and services all across this province and put money into our priorities, such as youth employment programs. That is exactly what we're doing.

I would just remind the members opposite that the member who asked me that question, the member for Renfrew North, was the Minister of Education and the Minister of Colleges and Universities, responsible for training in the colleges. Did he lay the foundation for training in this province? No, he did not. We've had to increase expenditures on training and apprenticeship programs by over 25% since we formed the government,

because they didn't do the job when they had the responsibility.

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): My question is to the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Finance. Mr Minister, Sid Ryan has said that there is no way he is going to be able to meet your June 4 deadline, that the talks could take six months. He cannot make the deadline, and it's going to take six months.

I want to read you a quote of what Liz Barkley said yesterday. She said: "What a mess. It was a waste of time. It was confusion." That's what your so-called partners are saying about this process. Quite frankly, for this Premier and this Deputy Premier to be talking about the talks going well is a lot like Neville Chamberlain saying, "There will be peace in our time." They are not going well. There is chaos over there today and there was yesterday.

Minister, the chaos can't continue. Do you intend to make taxpayers wait six months for a solution to this problem, and if not, when are you going to introduce legislation so that the talks can proceed and so that the people of this province will know you're serious about reducing the costs in the province of Ontario?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance): I know that the third party would like nothing better than for the government to bring in legislation and take everybody off the hook. That's what the third party would like to do.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: Well, it's not that easy. We believe that the best way to protect jobs and services in the public sector in community after community, all across Ontario—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Downsview.

Hon Mr Laughren: —is to negotiate an agreement at the social contract table in order to protect the very jobs of the members whose representatives are sitting at that table. That's the purpose of the social contract talks. I don't expect the Conservative Party in this province to want to see anything achieved through proper collective bargaining. We, however, want to see that achieved.

1420

Mr Carr: The problem is, they say it will take six months. We're only in the process of dealing about process right now and we haven't got down to any talks about where the savings will be.

What we're encouraging this government to do is what the Quebec government did yesterday. They said they are serious. They will introduce legislation to freeze the salaries of the civil servants if necessary. They've sent a clear signal they will act if the talks fail.

What we are saying to this government is, you've got people down at the Royal York talking about what the table will be, how many will sit where, whether the table will be round, and yet the people of this province are paying interest daily as a result of inaction by this government. What we're saying to you is, introduce the legislation and have it ready so that if the talks fail, the people around that table know you will act, because quite frankly, they do not believe you have the political courage to act and to do what is right.

What we're asking you today is, will you table the legislation so that if the talks fail we can act to legislate the people—

Hon Mr Laughren: No, absolutely not. We believe and I think that the public sector unions understand that in order to protect between 20,000 and 40,000 jobs all across the province, a social contract must be negotiated. They understand that. They know that the budget that is coming next week is going to reflect the \$2 billion in savings that must be achieved at the social contract table. They understand that.

Perhaps the member of the Conservative caucus doesn't understand that, but I think most people in the province do. While you may want to do what your leader said—bring in the legislation, bang, bang, bang—that's not our view of the way you negotiate with your own employees.

Mr Carr: The problem is that they honestly, truly don't believe you're serious. One of the reasons they don't believe you're serious is because they see you spending \$5,000 a day to hold talks at the Royal York—\$5,000 a day to hold talks down there—and they say, "These people aren't serious about restraint," and they do not see that you're prepared to legislate.

They're down there talking about tax raises. They're talking about all things except, how are we going to find the money by reducing their salaries? They're talking about everything else, including what type of drapes are going to be in the meetings, instead of talking about, how are you going to reduce the salaries?

What we're saying is those talks will not proceed. There will be no solution unless you have the political courage to come in with legislation so they know you are serious. The province of Quebec has had to do that and the people at that table know that they are serious. The problem is, Sid Ryan, Liz Barkley and the people around that table do not believe you have the political courage to do it.

The Speaker: Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Carr: I don't believe you have the political courage to do it. Will you stand up today and tell them that if these talks fail, you will have the political courage to legislate them at the earliest possible point if the talks fail? Will you do that today? Will you get these talks

going by making a clear statement that you're prepared to legislate?

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat, please. Minister.

Hon Mr Laughren: The member opposite apparently believes in the Clint Eastwood school of collective bargaining. That's not the position of this government.

We have said to our partners in the public sector, both the employers and the employees and their representatives, that we want to achieve a settlement at the social contract table. We have told them that expenditure reductions are not on the table, we have told them that tax policy is not on the table, that what is on the table is compensation in the public sector. They understand that very clearly. They know very well that we're serious—

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): They don't want that.

Hon Mr Laughren: I don't know who your confidants are in the public sector unions but I can tell you, we are deadly serious about it and they know we're serious.

Mr Dave Johnson (Don Mills): My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, the mayors are upset. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario has said clearly to the mayors that AMO is not negotiating on behalf of the municipalities, that AMO cannot negotiate on behalf of the municipalities, and AMO has indicated that this social contract will be the biggest single fiscal issue of their career.

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): Mike Harris wants bigger cuts.

The Speaker: The member for Ottawa West, please come to order.

Mr Dave Johnson: Yet, Mr Minister, the Premier will not talk to them. The mayor of Mississauga, representing 48 mayors, has contacted the Premier and there's been no response.

The mayors understand the fiscal problem you have. They understand that there needs to be action. The mayors are prepared to help you, but they need someone to talk to them. Will you, Mr Minister, talk to the mayors? Will you include the mayors, in a meaningful fashion, in the social contract negotiations?

Hon Mr Laughren: The chief negotiator for the government at the social contract tables is Mr Decter. That is whom AMO should talk to at the social contract table.

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I guess the member for Oriole is completely out to lunch. She has no idea what she's talking about. If I could return to the member who asked the question—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I wish the Liberals would let the member for Oriole ask a question in the House so she wouldn't have to interject full-time every day.

If the mayors of this province, through their organization, AMO, want to have in-depth discussions about the specific impact of the expenditure reductions, for example, on their municipalities, the Minister of Municipal Affairs is the person to whom they should direct their comments or their requests. That is his job, and he is doing that job and doing it very well. There's no sense in the mayors or AMO coming and talking to me. The chief negotiator at the social contract table is Mr Decter and the Minister of Municipal Affairs is the Honourable Ed Philip. That's whom they should talk to.

Mr Dave Johnson: Mr Minister, again I reiterate two points: One is that AMO has made it clear that AMO cannot negotiate the social contract on behalf of the municipalities. They do not have that authority. The second is that the mayors and the municipalities understand your predicament, understand the financial disaster that has been created, and are prepared to help you solve it.

But the mayors also see the chaos at the Royal York Hotel and are concerned with some of the suggestions that are coming forward. They are concerned, for example, with the pause day, one day off a month with no pay. They ask the question, if you negotiate with the unions in the absence of the municipalities—because AMO can't negotiate on behalf of the municipalities—a pause day for the ambulance drivers, will you also negotiate a pause day for heart attacks? If you negotiate a pause day for police officers, will you negotiate a pause day for crime? If you negotiate a pause day for the firefighters, can we have a pause day for fires in the province of Ontario?

The Speaker: Could the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Dave Johnson: The point is that the municipalities need the flexibility to deal with your cuts to solve your problems in their own way. Will you give the municipalities this authority to make the cuts that you need in their own way, using their own experience?

1430

Hon Mr Laughren: I think that's a good question. What's on the social contract table is a set of proposals that we put there. They are proposals. If the municipalities have better proposals to reduce compensation in the public sector, of course we'd be very interested in hearing those proposals.

As for your comment that AMO cannot negotiate on behalf of the municipalities, it concluded a very long and complex exercise on what is known as disentanglement in which they've—

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): Well, look what's happened to it. I don't think I would take that as an example. I don't think you could have picked a worse example.

Hon Mr Laughren: They were given the mandate—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: Whether or not. I mean, I know the Conservatives don't think anything should be negotiated. You think everything should be decreed by the provincial government, that all power and wisdom resides at Queen's Park. We happen not to believe that. We think there's room for negotiating with the people who deliver the services, and whether it's successful or not, the municipalities did give AMO the right to negotiate through the disentanglement process. So I don't think it's appropriate—

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Laughren: —or fair to say that AMO doesn't have the right to negotiate for the municipalities.

The Speaker: Final supplementary.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I think the difference, though, of being a Conservative is that we understand the difference when someone's hiding behind negotiations because there's a vacuum in leadership. There's no leadership on that side of the House. We, as the third party in this House, have told you since day one you must show some leadership. You haven't shown any leadership. That's why there's chaos. That's why you don't even have enough chairs at the bargaining table.

The question I'd like to put to the Finance minister is simply this. Mr Finance Minister, this process is flawed, badly flawed, from the beginning. It's a fly by the seat of your pants process. You thought it up in early April, and it didn't work then, but you insisted this is going to buy you back some of the valuable support that you've lost in the last two and a half years.

The question that's coming out of Metropolitan Toronto is this. You don't transfer any grants to the Metropolitan school boards, and the Metropolitan school boards are going to have to come up with funding under the social contract, and savings, and you don't flow any unconditional grants to the school boards. Are you going to ask for the most absurd of all, that the school boards write you a cheque for the savings so in essence the Metropolitan Toronto taxpayer is now flowing money to the provincial government in the form of an unconditional grant? Is this how absurd this whole process has become, that you're now pilfering the taxpayer of Metro Toronto in the name of a social contract?

Hon Mr Laughren: I cannot resist. It was a former Minister of Education when the Conservatives were in office named Bette Stephenson who wanted to pool the

commercial and industrial assessment, so I think that for the member for Etobicoke West—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would the minister take his seat, please.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Minister.

Hon Mr Laughren: Thank you, Mr Speaker. To the member for Etobicoke West: I would assume that he wouldn't expect us to be negotiating with the Metropolitan Toronto School Board here on the floor of the Legislature when that's supposed to be taking place at the social contract table.

The Speaker: New question.

MUNICIPAL FUNDING

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I find it, Minister, somewhat interesting to hear all the former municipal politicians in the third party standing up demanding rights for all the municipalities.

I have a quote from Hansard here by the leader of the third party, Minister, in which he says, "But I want to be very clear, through you, Mr Treasurer, to the Premier and the government, that we are supportive of the amount of cuts, and we don't think you've gone far enough."

Now they seem, Mr Minister, to have changed their stripe, now that the men and women of AMO and Mayor McCallion have banged on Mike Harris's head and said: "Mike, you don't really mean that, do you? We need your help, Mike." So now all of a sudden they're born again—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place a question, please.

Mr Mahoney: —trying to help the municipalities. I think it's wonderful.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the member place the question.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Mahoney: My question—I know it upsets you.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the honourable member quickly place a question.

Mr Mahoney: I'm sorry that I upset all these right-wingers over here like that, I really am. I didn't mean to do that. I wanted to ask a question because the Treasurer has said himself—

The Speaker: And I would appreciate your asking a question quickly.

Mr Mahoney: The Treasurer said that the municipalities should be talking to the Honourable Ed Philip, and my question—

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat, please. The member has utilized a considerable amount of time. I will ask him to please quickly place a question.

Mr Mahoney: I'm trying to. They're heckling me, Mr Speaker.

My question to the minister: The Treasurer said the municipalities should talk to you, sir. You have said and accused Chairman Tonks of fearmongering when he is indeed afraid of the cutbacks and the effects on the police and the fire department and all the municipal infrastructure. How can they come to you when all you do is attempt to intimidate them and accuse them of fearmongering?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): I was just speaking to Chairman Tonks only about an hour ago and he didn't feel terribly intimidated by me, so I hardly think that he feels intimidated. Indeed, he was quite understanding of the fact and said to me, "We are all part of the problem; we all want to be part of the solution and I appreciate that you have consulted with us."

We have released this morning the distribution of the \$110.8-million reduction program in terms of Metropolitan Toronto. That will work out to less than one half of 1% of their operating expenditures. Hardly a matter that they cannot manage and hardly a matter to cause great concern. They recognize that if we went on the way that the Liberals would have us do of spend, spend, spend, and not deal with the deficit, by 1995-96 we would spend 26 cents out of every dollar on interest rates to foreign banks, and that wouldn't create one job in Metropolitan Toronto or in Mississauga or in any of the other regions around.

Mr Mahoney: I can appreciate the fact that you're confused when you get a signal from the leader of the third party that he wants you to cut more one day, and the next day stands up and changes his tune and says you should be doing something else.

I can appreciate the fact that there's not a particularly clear message, but let me give you a clear message on behalf of the mayors and all the municipalities around this province. The message, sir, is that they are managing their books properly. They are running their corporations properly. In the case of my own municipality, there was even a 1% reduction in taxes which I'm sure drove you crazy and you're going to stick it to them now to make them pay for that.

Minister, the municipalities are trying to get a meeting with the Premier. He won't even answer the telephone. He won't respond to letters. They want to know just what they're supposed to do. Should they increase taxes to the ratepayers and their municipalities? Should they lay off firemen? Should they cut police services? What exactly should they do? They're asking that question. The Treasurer says you're the man to answer it. How do

you answer the municipalities? Are you just going to cut them off at the knees, or are you going to sit down and try to help them with their problems?

Hon Mr Philip: The member for Mississauga West says that we're getting mixed messages. The Conservatives are asking us to cut more, although their federal colleagues don't seem to be able to get hold of the deficit, and the Liberals want us to spend more and more and more, as they did when they were in office.

Quite frankly, the alarmist rhetoric of the member for Mississauga West does nothing to resolve the problem. In terms of—

Mr Mahoney: Now you're going to call me an alarmist, because you're finished calling Tonks one.

The Speaker: Order.

1440

Hon Mr Philip: He says that it will mean, in his question, major cuts and layoffs in Mississauga. He says it will mean major, major problems in Mississauga, and he says that Mississauga managed its own budget so well.

Last year, in unconditional grants alone Mississauga got \$8 million from this province. That helped them to manage their budget very well. This year, as a result of the unconditional grants reductions, it actually works out to 0.36; in other words, four tenths of 1% of their operational budget.

That's what the member for Mississauga West then is saying: somehow there are going to be terrible dramatic cuts in Mississauga and somehow the garbage isn't going to get picked up. Stop the alarmism. The mayors know now, they have the figures, and you're going to find then that they'll understand what we're trying to do and they'll be part of the solution, not part of the problem the way you are.

LAND REGISTRATION

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. I'm sure the minister recalls the company that she created, Teranet, and as you know, there was an agreement with the province of Ontario that it would contribute millions of dollars to this new company and in turn the other partner, Real/Data, would contribute an equal amount of money.

We know they've missed at least two payments towards the new company, Teranet—Real/Data has missed two payments. The third payment, which totals \$14 million, as I understand it, comes due tomorrow. My question to the minister is, have you received the \$14 million from Real/Data?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): First of all, I want to be very clear in assuring the House that irrespective of RDO's actions, the government and the public interest in the operation of the automated land registration system is

protected at all times and services to the public will continue as usual.

As well, what the member opposite fails to mention again and again is that in respect to Teranet, the government owns and has total ownership of all of the data. That's very important to understand, and the government also has control over the fee structuring, the intaking and accessing of all the data.

RDO's continuing its efforts right this very moment to find investors. There are Canadian companies who are very interested in investing and they are keeping us informed of what's happening in those negotiations. But no, as the member well knows, they have failed in this economy to be able to come up with their investment. The important thing is that the public service continues.

Mr Tilson: I think the problem, Madam Minister, is that you enter into a contract with a corporation such as Real/Data to do certain things. They were to contribute \$14 million. You're telling us today that they haven't made that contribution. They've breached the contract with you. The program can't continue without that \$14 million. I don't know where you're going to get the money, whether the Treasurer is going to give it to you or whether you are going to can the project.

I took the time yesterday, Madam Minister, to telephone your assistant deputy minister, Mr Daniels, and ask him this specific question, as I'm sure you are aware, and he has referred to exactly what you said, that you don't have the money.

My question to you is, who are the people who are interested in putting up this money? Will you tell us who those people are and will you be prepared to scrutinize those same people as you did for the people who entered into the contract for Teranet? Will you put that out for tender and will you tell us who those people are?

Hon Ms Churley: Yes, as I said previously, there are at this very moment now companies who are examining and considering investment in Teranet. I of course at this point can't say who these people are, but once an interest is expressed, and I believe there is quite an interest in this company, we will be examining very closely the components of that company.

The member has to bear in mind, as I said, that we are in a slowdown in our economy and that patient money is very hard to find right now for long-term investments such as Teranet, but it is seen as a very good investment. It's just that we have to look carefully for patient money to arrive, and I believe that there's a very good chance that will happen.

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, grants to the 38 conservation authorities across the province are to be reduced by \$10.6 million. The headquarters of the Grand River Conservation Authority, with responsibility for 657 kilometres of river, is in my riding, Cambridge.

The authority has the responsibility for flood monitoring, ongoing improvements in flood control, the prevention of erosion in the river banks, all of which activities are essential safety measures. As well, it is charged with a program of improvement in water quality, reservoir maintenance, ensuring the availability of water in its catchment area. I am told that parts of the catchment area rely on the Grand River for their drinking water.

My question to the minister is this: What assurances will he give to the people of my riding, to all the residents of the ridings in the Grand River watershed and in all of the conservation areas that those services essential to our health, safety and wellbeing are not at risk and that they will be maintained?

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): I thank the member for the question on an issue which I know is important in many communities.

Conservation authorities, as an agency of the government, have had to share in the expenditure reduction plan. However, conservation authorities have other funding. While they receive about a third of their funding from the province, they receive a third from area municipalities and they receive a third through their own revenue measures. So unlike some other agencies and some other organizations, they do have options in terms of raising revenue.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): What about the taxpayers?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order, the member for Grey.

Hon Mr Hampton: I believe that if we're able to work cooperatively, we will be able to address the expenditure control issues that conservation authorities have.

I met recently with the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario. We have agreed upon a plan of action, that we will meet one month from now to look at their views as to how we can successfully control expenditures and continue to provide the services that people need and expect.

The Speaker: Could the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Hampton: I would say to the member for Cambridge that I believe one month from now we will be able to show the people of the province and particularly the conservation authority interest groups that we can in fact handle their expenditure control problems.

Mr Farnan: Perhaps in replying to my supplementary the minister might reflect and give me the assurance I asked for. The assurance was that the essential services of health, safety and wellbeing of these communities are not put at risk and that they will be maintained.

In supplementary, many parts of the Grand River—the Kissing Bridge at Montrose, for instance—are tourist attractions, and work is proceeding on other enhancements such as a trail linking the riding of Cambridge

with Paris. The Grand River is to be designated a heritage river in 1994 because of its outstanding historic, recreational and cultural place in Ontario. The service industries in this part of Ontario expect a steady increase in local use and in tourism as a result.

Minister, what assurances will you give that the reasonable expectations of the Grand River becoming an augmented tourist attraction will not be damaged by these reductions in grants, necessary though they may be?

Hon Mr Hampton: To attempt to answer the member's first question again, we are assured by the conservation authorities that though they may have to curtail some of their non-core activities, though they may have to reduce some of their non-core activities—

Mr Murdoch: Who is going to pay their taxes?

The Speaker: Order. The member for Grey, please come to order.

Hon Mr Hampton: Those kinds of conservation and water control and water development activities that are central to conservation authorities, they believe and we believe they will be able to continue without interruption.

On the supplementary, the member refers to tourism development on the Grand River. I can only say to him that the issue of tourism development is one that not only does the province have some responsibility for but the conservation authorities, the municipalities and the federal government through the Canadian heritage river system have responsibility for, and we are proceeding to work out a basis to fund the development on the Grand River.

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IMPAIRMENT TESTING DEVICES

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): My question is to the Solicitor General and it's related to your April 22 decision to stop using the specific type of impaired driving screening device called the ALERT J3A. As you know, Mr Minister, in 1990 the grommets in this machine were changed, and it is these post-1990 machines about which concerns have been raised.

These approved screening devices are an important tool used by police on the front line in the battle against drunk driving, and as a result of your order, there are only four for the OPP being used right now. They have 432 of these ALERT machines; 176 of them use the old grommet and can still be used, but you've ordered them on to the shelves while people can drive around in this province and not be appropriately tested. I'm wondering, Mr Minister, if you will not let the OPP use the old machines with the old grommets to help reduce drunk driving while you fiddle around and make up your mind.

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General): I thank the member for the opportunity to address this important issue. First of all, let me thank him because I

do believe it is my first question from him as not only the new member but my new critic. Again, I formally welcome you to the House and to this portfolio.

My response begins with an acknowledgement that our decision was taken after two other provinces and after the RCMP had also decided to take similar action. I'm sure the honourable member will know, in researching his question, that these decisions are made on the recommendation of a federal advisory body called the alcohol test committee, which advises the federal Minister of Justice on exactly what units are allowable and what aren't. The member will of course know that each unit is named specifically in the legislation as to what is an allowable unit. It is this advisory group that sent out the message that these particular units are no longer considered to be absolutely reliable, due to changes not just the type of which the member has mentioned, but others that are in question too.

Mr Murphy: As I'm sure the minister is aware, I've read in the paper today that he says no decision is going to be made on this until September. Well, we're going to have a whole summer of driving on the roads of this province, and something has got to be done to make sure that the carnage that has happened before won't happen this summer due to the failure to provide the OPP with some screening devices.

As you're aware, there's an Ontario-made option, the Alcometer SL2, that can be purchased right away and can be done, replacing the entire OPP's screening devices, for approximately \$150,000, about the price of the salary of the ministers who are without portfolio on that side of the House.

I'm wondering if you will commit to the people of this province to get on and get a new screening device as soon as possible so we don't have any repeats of carnage and the OPP and other police have an appropriate screening device to make sure we have safe roads.

Hon Mr Christopherson: I think I heard two questions in there. I'll deal with the first one first.

With regard to his comment that I made a statement in the media that no decision would be made until September, that is not accurate. I don't think it even reflects exactly what was in the article. But certainly I took the opportunity earlier today at a news conference to be very clear about what I was saying when I talk time lines. I have met, as I'm sure the member knows, with the president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, as well as a representative from Metro police and, of course, our own OPP commissioner. To talk about this very issue in terms of time lines, we've made a commitment that we want to have as many of these units replaced as possible before the summer season, for exactly the reasons the member mentions.

I commit to him now that I and the police chiefs will work closely to ensure that as many of those units are replaced as possible beforehand.

The second thing I would say to him on the unit that he talks about—I would be a little bit cautious and just signal to my colleague that the unit the police prefer, when I talk to them, is not that particular unit, it's another unit, and that one is in front of the federal government—in fact, this alcohol test committee. We're awaiting their approval. It should happen within the next few weeks, and when that approval is in place we will put in place a plan that will replace the units using the kind of machine that the police want, that the police are recommending to me, not just what the honourable member from across the way thinks we ought to do in this province.

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): I have a question for the Minister of Education. Mr Minister, you will be aware that last week this Legislature voted that we should take some action with regard to construction workers who come to Ontario, whereas construction workers don't have the same opportunity to go to Quebec to work. I want to talk particularly about what effect it's having on our young people.

At the present time, there are 540 residents of the province of Quebec who are enrolled in Ontario apprenticeship training programs. These 540 people don't live in Ontario; they return to Quebec each night, they pay Quebec provincial income tax, they buy their groceries and supplies presumably in the province of Quebec, yet they come to Ontario each day to take advantage of our Ontario skills development program. For example, 55 of the 540 Quebec residents are electrical apprentices in the Ottawa area, each of them receiving 36 weeks of schooling, at an approximate cost to the Ontario taxpayer of \$11,000 worth of training.

Can you tell me why the province of Ontario is paying to educate Quebec's workforce?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): I appreciate the question from the member. He will understand, because he's had some contact with our ministry, that the prime responsibility for dealing with this whole issue, which is in fact a trade barrier within our nation, lies with the Minister for Economic Development and Trade. I can certainly indicate to the member that this issue has been raised as late, as I understand it, as at a meeting of the trade ministers that was held on March 18 of this year.

We intend to continue to pursue the issue because we agree with you that there is unfairness, but not necessarily thinking that the best way of solving the problem is to impose the same kinds of trade barriers in terms of the workforce that Quebec imposes on Ontario, that a better way of trying to deal with this is to get Quebec to agree that there has to be equity of access on both sides of the border.

Mr Sterling: Mr Minister, I agree and everybody agrees that the best solution would be negotiation.

Unfortunately, this problem has existed through three governments, including the government of which I was a part.

What do I say to the 200 well-qualified Ontario applicants who would like to become an electrician's apprentice when 55 of these positions are being occupied by Quebec residents? What do I say to my constituents who are saying, "Why on earth are you allowing these Quebec residents to have my opportunity for training for a job in the future and you're allowing Quebec people to come in," whereas they say to me then, "I do not have the same opportunity to go over to the province of Quebec and obtain the same apprenticeship training in that province"?

It's very, very unfair to these young people and, quite frankly, many of the people of Ottawa-Carleton, many of the people of eastern Ontario, and in fact this Legislature itself has said to you and to the government: "We are fed up. The talking has gone on for 15 years. The time is now for a solution."

Hon Mr Cooke: The government agrees with the member that the barriers that currently exist are terribly unfair to the people of this province, and we expect and hope that the province of Quebec will treat people from our province as fairly as we're treating people from their province.

It's best to resolve this matter at the negotiating table. I think all of us agree with that. I think a clear message was sent from the Legislature when your resolution was carried in the Legislature, and that should very much help the negotiating hand of the Minister of Economic Development and Trade for the province of Ontario. I expect that those discussions will continue, and this government expects that Quebec will respond, because the province of Ontario cannot continue to deal with the terrible inequity and unfairness that continues to exist.

X-RAY SERVICES

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): My question is to the Minister of Health.

I have an article published in the past issue of the Welland Tribune, an article that, if what it says is true, contains some disturbing news about the future of X-ray service in the province.

In it, the past president of the Welland County General Hospital warns that non-emergency X-ray service could be capped. The former president is quoted as saying that this could happen because the Ministry of Health wants to shut down all private X-ray clinics. The article reports that:

"According to the past president, the ministry is proposing to stop paying the technical fees for X-rays taken in private clinics. Apparently, this proposal is contained in a ministry memorandum sent to the Ontario Medical Association.

"The Welland County General Hospital fears that if

the proposal is implemented, more outpatients would flock to hospitals for X-rays, but the hospitals may not be able to accommodate them all because the technical fee the province pays is a fixed amount.

"The worry is that there is no financial incentive for the hospital to do more X-rays than the amount the fee pays for, and the end result, according to the past president of the Welland County General Hospital, could be a cap on non-emergency X-ray service."

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Is it true that people in the province who need non-emergency X-ray service can expect some problems obtaining this service? Can the minister advise this House and my constituency if these services are being capped?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): I'm glad to have an opportunity to clarify an article that I think was the result of a misinterpretation by the hospital administrator of some statements about a potential change within the Ministry of Health.

Ontario has been one of the few provinces which permitted physicians to join a group and bill for services through one collective number. This system has created problems because there isn't an ability to both monitor services, to track services, to identify patterns of practice, so we have been considering changing the policy to require physicians to bill all services through their own individual number.

We've been working with the Ontario Medical Association on this through the joint management committee, which is how we like to discuss changes with the profession, and the issue raised by the Welland hospital administrator relates to how this would affect hospitals.

I think it's important for me to say that if the system is changed, an alternative means of ensuring hospital reimbursement would have to be developed, and in addition, any change would not affect payments to privately run X-ray clinics.

The Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Pursuant to standing order 34(a), the member for York Mills has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Transportation concerning graduated licensing. This matter will be debated today at 6 pm.

PETITIONS

PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition here from a number of residents of a seniors' building in my riding, 801 Mount Pleasant Road.

"We, the undersigned, members of Club 801 Moore Place, 801 Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, are opposed

to the change in services of pharmacy services, prescriptions, price changes and cost-sharing and feel that seniors should not be required to pay the price."

I've affixed my signature because I agree with their sentiments.

GAMBLING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm very happy to sign this petition.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): It's my pleasure to present a petition on behalf of my colleague, the Honourable Evelyn Gigantes, the member for Ottawa Centre. It was prepared by members of Social Work Advisory for Gerontology, who are a group of over 100 professionals and non-professional social workers who work in the Ottawa-Carleton health centres, homes for the aged and service agencies supporting senior citizens.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the residents of Ottawa-Carleton are presently required to transfer to Brockville Psychiatric Hospital for medium- and long-term psychogeriatric treatment; and

"Whereas there is physical space available in existing facilities in the Ottawa-Carleton region; and

"Whereas the geographic distance constitutes an unreasonable hardship for families who want to provide ongoing support to alleviate the emotional turmoil suffered by families now compelled to place their loved ones outside their geographic area;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To provide funding for long-term psychogeriatric care including hospital beds in Ottawa-Carleton, and we urge this funding to take place as quickly as possible."

ACCESSORY APARTMENTS

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): I have a petition here with some 100 or more names of residents of my community on it. It's addressed to the Legislature of Ontario:

"Whereas the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Municipal Affairs have released 'draft legislation for apartments in houses, granny flats,' to permit accessory dwelling units 'as of right' in all residential areas and to permit granny flats;

"We, the undersigned, object to the 'draft legislation for apartments in houses, granny flats,' for the following reasons and petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"(1) That the province examine the implications that the proposed legislation may have on the rights of property owners, landlords and tenants with respect to their expectations of zoning authority and the neighbourhoods in which they live;

"(2) That the province not entertain this proposed legislation removing the right of local government to regulate development without adequate public notification and opportunity to review and comment on the draft legislation;

"(3) That the local municipality be granted the authority to regulate and license (or register) accessory apartments;

"(4) That the province, in consultation with local and regional authorities, examine methods of compensating the municipality for increased costs of servicing new residential growth (accessory apartments);

"(5) That right of entry for bylaw enforcement officers to inspect accessory apartments during reasonable hours be incorporated into the legislation;

"(6) That representatives from the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs be requested to conduct a public meeting in Brampton"—they'll love it there, too—"to discuss the draft legislation with the community; and

"(7) That the city of Brampton supports granny flats as a form of housing intensification subject to the assurance that the units will be removed at the end of their intended use."

I have affixed my signature thereto.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment, and are faced

with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I support this petition and I have signed it as well.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I'm glad to add these names to the thousands of signatures of people who are protesting casino gambling.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has had a historical concern for the poor in society, who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized casino gambling despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I affix my signature to this petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr David Winninger (London South): I have a petition signed by 116 individuals petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that Bill 164 be withdrawn.
1510

POST-POLIO SYNDROME

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas post-polio is a new phenomenon to attack survivors of polio;

"Whereas the Ottawa and District Post-Polio Association has been formed to help survivors of polio;

"Whereas most family practitioners do not have the specialized knowledge to treat post-polio symptoms effectively;

"Whereas we, the members and friends of the Ottawa and District Post-Polio Association, wish to emphasize to the Ontario government the need to fund a post-polio clinic in Ottawa;

"Whereas a formal request was presented by the Ottawa and District Post-Polio Association to the Ottawa-Carleton Regional District Health Council in May 1988 and received a top priority at that time;

"Whereas the Rehabilitation Centre of Ottawa-Carleton has presented a proposal to the Ministry of Health for funds to establish a post-polio clinic;

"Whereas there are at least 1,000 known polio survivors in the catchment area of the Rehabilitation Centre who need the immediate services of a clinic;

"Whereas there are at least 5,000 polio survivors in Ontario;

"Whereas there is only one formally constituted post-polio clinic, which is in Toronto and which has a lengthy waiting list;

"Whereas the cost and difficulties of several trips to the Toronto clinic and staying overnight each time are often insurmountable for a disabled person;

"Whereas polio survivors who had no paralysis from the initial attack of polio are not immune from developing post-polio symptoms of varying severity;

"Whereas research indicates that 80% of polio survivors may develop post-polio symptoms anywhere from seven to 71 years after the initial attack;

"Whereas post-polio symptoms are not related to the aging process;

"Whereas because of immigration, the post-polio population will not diminish,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to establish a post-polio clinic in the Rehabilitation Centre of Ottawa-Carleton for the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of patients and to disseminate information so that the estimated 1,000 known polio survivors in the centre's catchment area can receive adequate treatment and that the medical profession be educated regarding the post-polio syndrome."

These petitioners are presented and I have affixed my signature.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Peter North (Elgin): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario with some 235 signatures on it that Bill 164 be withdrawn.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Further petitions? The honourable member for—

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Bruce?

The Acting Speaker: Bruce.

Mr Elston: I was hoping, Mr Speaker, that you might see me this time.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

In addition to councils, chambers of commerce, business associations, labour groups, riding associations, school boards and others, this particular petition is signed by people from Whitby, Ajax, Oshawa, Bowmanville, Thornhill, Fenelon Falls and several others. I have attached my signature, and this forms part of a group of over 15,000 who are in support of the Bruce A carrying on.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, hereby request immediate action to be taken by the Ontario government, through the Ministry of Transportation, whereby the sections of Highway 33 from the town of Picton limits to Glenora ferry and from Glenora ferry, Adolphustown to the village of Bath, be reconstructed and paved. The said sections have not been tended to in many years and the travelled portion is not only a hazard to motorists but a disgrace to the heritage highway system."

GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition regarding casino gambling, people opposed to it.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario;

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and

economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has" supposedly "had a historical concern for the poor in society, who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I have signed it because I agree.

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario signed by 10 of my constituents who petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I have signed this.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I have a petition that has been signed by well over 15,000 people in the province in support of Bruce A.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

I have attached my name to this petition, which includes signatures from Courtice, Pickering, Toronto, Ajax, Agincourt and other places removed from our particular area who are showing their support for us.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HUMAN RIGHTS CODE AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LE CODE DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE

On motion by Mr Callahan, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 14, An Act to prevent the loss of the Protection of the Human Rights Code by Agreement / Loi interdisant de renoncer par voie d'entente à la protection que reconnaît le Code des droits de la personne.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Would the honourable member have a short résumé?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please, the table has to recognize the bill.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): The law clearly prevents a person who has rights infringed under the Ontario Human Rights Code to sign those rights away. However, in a recent case in my riding, a constituent who had a learning disability and had been employed by a company for a considerable period of time was discharged. He filed a complaint with the Human Rights Commission.

Unfortunately, in the meantime the company he worked for had him sign a waiver of his dismissal. The Human Rights Commission found that this was in fact a bar to the enforcement of his rights under the Human Rights Code, despite the fact that it flew totally in the face of the jurisprudence in that regard. The purpose of this section is to ensure that no person, regardless of what he signs, can in fact lose his rights under the Human Rights Code, and this man did in fact lose them because he was let go because of a learning disability.

1520

OPPOSITION DAY

FISCAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Mr Speaker, with concurrence, and in the absence of Mrs McLeod—

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Where is she?

Mr Mahoney: She'll be here. Don't you worry. I would like to move this opposition day resolution.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Do we have consent for the honourable member for Mississauga West to proceed? Agreed.

Mr Mahoney, on behalf of Mrs McLeod, moved opposition day motion number 2:

Recognizing that, since taking office, the NDP government has consistently mismanaged the financial affairs of the province and has been unable to devise a plan to pull the economy out of the recession;

And whereas there are 550,000 people without work in the province of Ontario;

And whereas 214,000 have joined the unemployment line since the NDP government came to power;

And whereas for over two years, the NDP government ignored the Liberal caucus's calls for fiscal restraint, failed to recognize the serious nature of Ontario's fiscal crisis until far too late, and has now engaged in a poorly thought out, last-minute exercise to cut spending that will transfer the burden of restraint to school boards, hospitals, municipalities, colleges and universities and social service agencies and will affect most Ontarians in their daily lives, without adequately addressing the Ontario government's own operations;

And whereas, when in power, the Conservative Party ran deficits for 15 straight years prior to 1985, and left Ontario with accumulated debt of \$30 billion;

And whereas, when in power, the Conservative Party averaged 12% spending increases annually between 1980 and 1985;

And whereas, during its last five years in power, the Conservative Party averaged deficits of \$2.1 billion annually;

And whereas, when in power, the Liberal government was the only government to balance its budget in Ontario in the last 20 years;

And whereas the federal Conservative government has failed to manage the national economy, left Canadians over \$450 billion in debt and has produced a do-nothing budget that fails to reassure international investors;

And whereas the people of Ontario are becoming increasingly concerned about their future and the future of their children, due to the fact that they have no confidence in the ability of the NDP government to restore economic security and health to the province of Ontario;

Therefore the Liberal caucus calls upon the government to take a commonsense approach to managing the economy and to implement the following recommendations:

(1) Create an economic climate in which job creation and economic renewal are their number one priority;

(2) Get its own fiscal house in order through genuine reorganization and restructuring and elimination of waste in order to get the deficit under control.

(3) Refuse to increase taxes in order to protect fragile economic recovery and encourage an economic climate that will lead to job creation.

(4) Review expensive programs such as the \$1.1-billion Jobs Ontario Training program, the \$30 million bureaucracy created by the advocacy legislation and the Interim Waste Authority that has cost taxpayers \$30 million so far.

(5) Ease the regulatory burden on business by reviewing the NDP's anti-job legislation, such as Bill 40, and eliminating the costly bureaucratic bottlenecks in areas such as land use planning and the WCB.

(6) Focus on training and retraining to help people get back to work and to make our workforce more attractive to international investors.

(7) Introduce measures to alleviate youth unemployment to give our 140,000 unemployed young people hope for the future.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Mahoney, the honourable member for Mississauga West, has the floor.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, I want to address you and the members of this Legislature and I think more importantly the people of this province on this resolution that has been so thoughtfully drafted by our leader, Lyn McLeod, a person who, I believe, will indeed be the next Premier of this province and the one who will be responsible for cleaning up the terrible mess that will be left to us by the incompetence of the current government.

I think it's quite clear to people that when they look at a government that starts off the day, so to speak, facing a \$10-billion deficit, you have to wonder if it has any idea what it's doing. What happens is that you tend to get the government being defensive. That's understandable. They come back and they say: "It isn't our fault. You Liberals left us in a mess. You Liberals created this problem." Let's be clear about that. The Liberal government, in the five years that we were in power, managed to balance the books twice, and for the first time actually paid \$430 million—

Mr Peter North (Elgin): Give it a break.

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: I know it upsets them—off the debt. That is in fact a first in living memory in this province, that we actually reduced the debt.

Now, here's the management that comes in. Floyd Laughren, the Treasurer, when he became Treasurer, had a press conference, and Floyd Laughren, I would say, is an honest, decent man. The Treasurer came forward at a time when he had a press conference to announce the deficit that he would be facing to start off with, and he announced it somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$2.4 billion. The press jumped on him right away and said, "Mr Treasurer, did the Liberals lie?" Mr Laughren said, much to the unhappiness of his caucus, by the way, "No, the Liberals did not lie." Mr Laughren said, as a matter of fact, that as a result of the downturn in the retail sales in this province—

Mr North: No, it isn't.

Mr Mahoney: That's exactly what he said—as a result of the downturn in the housing industry, this province lost revenue in the neighbourhood of \$700 million in retail sales tax and \$400 million in land transfer tax. We can understand that. We don't blame Floyd or the NDP for that particular problem. If anything, more of that blame lies with the cousins of the Conservative Party, in Ottawa.

Then you go on and the NDP got a little bit creative and they said, "We're going to pay off the stadium debt"—that's \$300 million—even though it wasn't due. They could have negotiated a better deal. "We're going to pay off the Urban Transportation Development Corp debt in Thunder Bay," even though it wasn't due, \$400 million.

Good politics by the member for Nickel Belt to wipe those debts off. I'm glad to see him here, because he is an honourable man who told the truth until he got squeezed by the back bench and even maybe the Premier, who said: "Floyd, be a little nastier to those guys. Don't be necessarily just coming out and admitting that they'd—go ahead and give them a kick. We want you to do that." But that's what in fact happened.

Mr North: Give him some water.

Mr Mahoney: I've got water, thanks.

The deficit ran up in the initial days as a result of problems that were beyond their control, but let's be clear: We were only sitting at about \$2.4 billion. We were not facing a \$17-billion deficit that supposedly the Premier has said they're facing, although I predict—you heard it here, and Gerry Phillips, our critic has said it—the actual deficit the NDP will fly on budget day, Wednesday next, will be in the neighbourhood of \$8 billion to \$8.1 billion.

The interesting thing is that they'll try to claim some success in bringing forward only an \$8-billion deficit. Unbelievable. The benchmark that this government has set for deficits is \$10 billion, but we all know that the incompetence of this government to go and plan any kind of economic recovery is legend in the province of Ontario.

What is happening, though, that is of some frustration and concern, are certain frauds being perpetrated by members in the third party opposite. Let me just tell you that when the Conservatives were in power, we had, as the resolution said, 15 years of running deficits. It was common. Let me say to some of the members opposite, I remember the days when I was on municipal council. Those were good days. These are good days too, in a lot of ways. I remember those days when we used to get—

Interjection: Days with Margaret.

Mr Mahoney: With Margaret Marland, and, boy, let me tell you, the member for Mississauga South used to be just as upset as I was about this.

1530

We used to get missiles from the provincial government announcing that it was not increasing taxes. You know how they did it? The same way that you people are doing it right now in the sense that you are passing on your problems to the lower levels of government, to the municipalities. That was a Tory trick. They invented that trick. Darcy McKeough, Bill Davis, Clyde Bennett—

Interjection.

Mr Mahoney: Claude Bennett. Clyde, Claude, close enough. They invented that trick, Mr Speaker, as you well know, of saying: "Let's just pass the burden on to the lower levels of government. Those guys have got lots of money and flexibility and, besides, people don't really understand what's increasing their property tax, so they won't blame us, and we'll just give them the problem." I remember those days. They were legendary.

We would wind up having to go to the people for our police services, for our fire services, for our parks and our recreation, for the education of our kids. We would have to go to them. You know what we called the Tories? We called them the Fathers of Underfunding when it came to education.

When we became the government, for the first time in the history of this province the school boards came to us, and so did the municipalities, and said: "We would like to plan a little bit further than one day at a time, one month at a time, even one year at a time. We'd like to look long-range."

So our government announced a \$900-million, three-year capital budget program to the schools in this province—first time ever. We went to the school boards and we said: "We understand your problems. We are going to provide you with three years planning in advance, a commitment that the money will flow, that it will be there." We had to do that because the portables that were occurring all over the province were clearly as a result of the Conservatives.

Now, as I pointed out earlier, we have the Tories standing up—it's such irony—as the NDP passes all of its problems down to the school boards and to the municipalities and to social service agencies and to the firefighters. Let me tell you, you're passing your problems right on to the people. How many taxpayers are there in this province, folks? One. One taxpayer, and you're passing your problems on just as the Conservatives did.

I'm sure you must have found a Tory manual when you took office—somehow we hadn't managed to shred it—on how to get rid of deficits, on how to deal with your problems, and you're simply implementing that policy.

It couldn't be more clear that the Conservatives enjoy it when Mike Harris stands up and says, "I want to be

very clear, through you, Mr Treasurer, to the Premier and the government, that we are supportive of the amount of cuts, and we don't think you've gone far enough yet."

Just let me tell you, these guys are in bed. It makes me ill. Even the Premier, I know, thinks it's disgusting, but he's stuck with it. They're in bed, they've pulled the comforter up over, they're snuggled in together.

Let me tell you, you're going to do irreparable damage to the municipal people, irreparable damage to the school children—you're talking 40 kids in a class—irreparable damage with what you're doing. You're mismanaging this economy, as this resolution clearly points out, and you are destroying the infrastructure and taking away hope for all people: our young people, our senior citizens and our local leaders in this community. This government should be ashamed of itself.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? The honourable member for Oakville South.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I'm pleased to enter the debate and to add a few comments on what's happening.

They're pointing at me to go at the Liberals, and we will do that, although I would like to be a little bit more constructive and talk about some of the solutions. Having said that, I know it's very easy to criticize and to talk about some of the problems, but I want to spend most of my time getting into some of the solutions, what I think we should do. I spent a great deal of time putting together our recommendations in our pre-budget minority report, and I want to touch basically on some of the solutions we see.

But I also want to go through the motion that was introduced by the Liberal Party, and I think it's almost a given now that over the last little while the financial affairs have been mismanaged in this province. I think, as many people will know, going way back to the first budget, we had to resort to basically going on strike and holding up this place because we said: "Don't do it. You can't spend your way out of it."

We went through a period of time where we said, "We need to have public hearings. Don't do it," and of course the other side laughed at us. Quite frankly, even in the last election we said that you can't continue to tax, spend and borrow like there was no tomorrow. Not only did the NDP laugh at us, but the Liberals laughed at us. But I want to say to the people of this province: No one is laughing now, because we were right.

When I look at the spending in this province, which we put in our minority report—and I just want to briefly touch on that before going to some of the other points. If you look back to 1983-84—and the Treasurer here will know this—we were spending \$25 billion in the province of Ontario. Now, of course, we're

heading—where we end up with the cuts, I don't know, but we're heading to about \$55 billion.

But we don't blame this NDP government for most of that increase in spending. The people who created this problem were the Liberal government. If you look through those years when they took government between 1985 and 1990, they were spending in some cases double and triple the rate of inflation, and I think that's very important to realize.

In fact I remember that when I was thinking about running, the four western premiers were critical of the former Treasurer, Mr Nixon, because they said he was increasing inflation in this country with the massive, outrageous spending that went on, and we told him, "You can't continue to do it."

Interjection.

Mr Carr: I know the Treasurer says he was and I know he was there encouraging them, saying: "Spend more. You should have spent more."

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): No, we told him, "Be careful, Bob."

Mr Carr: "Be careful, Bob." I don't think you were saying that, the Minister of Finance.

But during that period, if you look at the statistics which I put together in that report, and I know some of the members have had a chance to look at it, we were spending double and in some cases triple the rate of inflation, and you knew. We had a saying here in this province during that period under the Liberals that anything that moved, they taxed it; if it still moved, they regulated it; then ultimately when it went out of business, they ended up turning around and subsidizing it. So during that period of time we had increases each and every year. They were encouraged by their partners during the early years of that coalition.

It's interesting that the previous speaker talked about the Conservatives being in with the NDP. I remember that this Conservative government that ruled for 42 years was defeated by a coalition that was put together during that period, and if you look at the spending, that was even worse than in the years of the late 1980s, because what they were doing during that period was spending more and more money.

Quite frankly, when you look at all the services in this province, in health care we now have fewer hospital beds and there are now waiting lists that are longer; in education, we now have about 30% of our children who are graduating who are functionally illiterate and can't do basic math skills. So they pumped all the money into this area and yet things got worse: waiting lists for social assistance, waiting lists for non-profit housing. All the things that they did during this period of time made things worse and worse.

My friend the member for Wellington and I were laughing at one of the points in there where it said,

"Whereas the Liberal caucus has called for fiscal restraint for the last two years." Well, my goodness, anybody who has been around here could not have forgotten the chanting that went on from the Liberal benches. They were literally chanting: "Spend more. This program, spend more." We said, "Don't do it." We said during the first budget, "You can't run up the deficits," and during that period of time, there they were every day in question period: "What about this program? What about this program? Spend more in this area." Quite frankly, you may disagree with us, but at least we've been consistent.

I don't want to spend a great deal of time going back on the Liberal record other than to say that one of the concerns that we've got when people talk about records—and my friend the member for Wellington often laughs about this. During that period of time, some of the younger members here, we couldn't even vote during that period, the Davis years. But for the Liberal members, each and every one of them, with the exception of a couple of the new members, were not only here and a part of that government; many of them were the ones who were in cabinet making the big decisions.

If we look at spending over the period of time, we got ourselves dug in this hole not during the two years that began this NDP government, although as you know, it spent, again, about 13.5% its first year. The spending that we have got in this province has been a direct result of the continuous spending going back to the mid-1980s.

I must say, I think they have finally changed their tune. They realize you can't continue to go on. I look at things like non-profit housing, where we spent—what did the auditor say?—\$5 billion over the last few years, at two or two and a half times what the private sector would do in terms of putting these shelters up.

I notice during that period of time we had some of the failed programs, the famous Ataritari. Remember that debacle? That'll cost us probably upwards of \$500 million, getting up close to \$1 billion, some people say, and not one unit was built. Not one unit is going to be built after all that spending that went on during that period of time.

Unlike my friends in the Liberal Party, and I just basically want to go into some of their solutions—it won't take long, because they have not offered any solutions. What we said, and I will report here—in our pre-budget document we laid it out—we said that there should be a moratorium on non-profit housing in the province of Ontario.

They've said during the period of time, the Liberals, "Yes, you can't increase taxes. Don't run up the deficit," but they haven't listed anywhere where there can be any substantial savings. I know my friend the member for St Catharines talks about advertising and the \$1 million here and the \$1 million there. My friends, we are talking

about heading towards \$55 billion, with a B. So when you talk about \$1 million here or \$2 million there, quite frankly, it's like talking about mice in the basement when there are elephants on the roof.

Unless you tackle the three major spending programs in this province—and one of them I want to address is social assistance. There in that particular area we're up to about \$6.2 billion, and unless and until you can deal with that, there will never, ever be any opportunity to reduce spending or to reduce taxes in the province of Ontario.

I will say that I appreciate the fact that they have attempted to come up with a couple of solutions here and they are now, as we all know, focusing the attention on the Conservative Party, because I think most people in this province realize that in the next election this government will never be elected.

I say to my friend the member for Oxford, who is out looking for another job right now, I assume, because when the two years are up he'll be unemployed, most people realize that this province will be governed by another party and that it will be a case of either the Liberals or the Conservatives. I say to my friends opposite who will be out of jobs, the reason the people of this province are looking to the other two parties is because they need to have solutions.

We began this process going away back, some of the members in our caucus, and said, "We can't have business as usual." We can't continually stand up and say, 'The government's terrible, they aren't doing things right,' without offering solutions.

Going way back a year ago, we introduced our first document, *New Directions: A Blueprint for Economic Renewal and Prosperity in Ontario*. Eighteen months ago we said, "You have to control spending." In it, we outlined things like what to do with social assistance, investment strategy, our balanced budget provisions. We talked about the moratorium on the labour legislation going way back. We didn't, as often politicians do, talk on one side of the mouth at one time and then in the exact opposite the next day. We put in writing exactly what we stand for and what we believe.

When I look through the Liberal document, or the motion here—the same thing when it came to education. About six months ago we put out our second document, *New Directions: A Blueprint for Learning in Ontario*; concrete proposals, not one-line, vague outlines of what you should be doing like were listed here, which if I can find it here, says, "Focus on training and retraining to help people get back to work and make our workforce more attractive to international investors." Well, quite frankly, that could be written by anybody on any side of the political spectrum.

What we did is put together something simple and easy to read, 30 pages, of the things we believe in, going

from audits to teacher training to nutrition programs to dropout rates to technology programs, English as a second language, number of school days, discipline in schools, setting standards, core curriculum. All the things that we believed, we outlined in our first documents.

I think at the end of the day people will—and I know even in caucus there may be some people who don't agree with everything in there when you put this together. Because that's the old political way of doing things. Don't offer solutions; criticize the government and then when you're speaking to whatever group is out there, say, "Yes, we'd help you"; as Mike Harris has called it, attempting to be all things to all people. That may have worked in 1990. It doesn't work today.

So what we did is offer some concrete solutions. I know I won't have time to go through all of them, but what we did is we took a look at some of the areas. We talked about the tax measures. We talked about how really in the province of Ontario we do not right now have a problem with revenue; what we do have is a spending problem.

I want to read a couple of comments that came through from the finance and economic affairs committee pre-budget hearings. There was some moving testimony. I want to read something from Pat Palmer, who is the Ontario Chamber of Commerce president.

Mr Sutherland: A good guy.

Mr Carr: Yes, he is, member for Oxford, a good guy. He said:

"Never in the past half-century have business conditions in Ontario been as bad: record numbers of bankruptcies, chilling numbers of plant closures.

"See our blood. No more taxes. Tax increases will only make the deficit position worse and subsequently put even more pressures on our social programs."

That's why we've been so critical of the Liberal government over that period, because if you look at the statistics, as we did, through the graphs, you will see that the per capita taxes in this province not only doubled over the period that it was in government; it was well over 100%. So quite frankly, when we look at the problems we've got today in terms of the taxes and the spending, we didn't get there overnight. It was part of the legacy going way back.

Had there been new Liberal members elected, one can say, "Well, they weren't a part of it." The reason we are critical of these Liberals is that not only were they here as backbenchers; most of them were around the cabinet table making these decisions. So it's fine to say today, "We're in this crisis. Don't increase taxes; don't increase the deficit," but they don't offer any solutions as to where the cuts can be made.

When I look at our debt over the last little while, we have been consistent. We have said, "You can't continue to run up the spending." We were the first ones in our

minority report, for example, to call for a cutback in the civil service back to the 1985 levels. We were prepared to put that in. In point 5 we said, "We need to get back to the 1985 levels in terms of the number of civil servants." No other political party would have the courage in opposition to say that, because you might alienate certain groups. We did it because we believe that if we were in government, that's exactly what we would do. That's why our friends in the Liberal Party are a little upset with us supporting the government, because we have said it is not politics as usual. If they do make the right choices and if they do make some of the right decisions in terms of cutting back the size of the civil service, we will be there to applaud them and to say we can't continue going on.

Some of the other points that were listed—I think when they get down to the specifics here, the seven-point plan, there really is nothing in there that you can grab and say, "Boy, that's something we hadn't thought of."

"Create an economic climate in which job creation and economic renewal are their number one priority." I've heard this Premier say that's what he's done for the last two and a half years, close to three years. He's the one who's been saying that's been their number one priority. So everyone agrees on that, but we need to be specific.

The Liberal Party had its chance in its pre-budget hearings to do that, and when I look at its recommendations in there, quite frankly, I don't mean to offend any individuals, but it is sad that a political party today would actually put forward these recommendations on pages 5 and 6 as a blueprint for what it would do in government. If I showed that to my 10-year-old kids, they would laugh at me in terms of what the answers or the solutions are. Until they're prepared to make the tough choices, I think they will continue to lose more and more credibility with the public, because in spite of what you might think about some of our ideas, you know very clearly that we are not only prepared to stand up for them; we're prepared to articulate them. We won't change them when there happens to be a bye-election, just because politically the winds may change. We have stuck to them, and at the end of the day I think we're going to have the credibility on those issues.

They talk about the tax increases. We're glad they finally got around to our thinking, because quite frankly, the problem we've got right now is if we increase any more taxes, you're going to kill whatever recovery is coming as a result of the tax increases. I say that to the Treasurer. I know he's getting a lot of political heat from the people in the social contract talks. The last thing we need in the province of Ontario is more tax increases, and we will continue to fight them, as we did the Liberals, every step of the way if they increase any taxes, because all you will do is kill this recovery in the province of Ontario.

They do talk about Bill 40, eliminating that. I wish the Liberal Party had stood up during those debates and said: "We're going to do as the Conservatives have done. We will not only repeal Bill 40, but we are going to introduce legislation to bring in the secret ballot for certification, ratification and strike vote." Had we done that, I honestly, truly believe that bill wouldn't have gone through, because the people pushing this, people like the Gord Wilsons and some of the other people who were pushing this, would have said: "Now, let me think. This government isn't going to be elected. The Conservatives are going to come in if they get elected and repeal it and then introduce secret ballot provisions." If the Liberals had said that as well, most of them would have said, "Well, we'll leave it alone, because we can have everything we want in two years, but after two years, what we're going to have is a secret ballot for certifications." I think the OFL would have been the first one to say, "We'll leave it as it is. The certification process would have been better in the past than it will be through secret ballot," because, as you know, a lot of the labour leaders are fearful of the secret ballot provision in the certification process, and had the Liberals stood up and said that they were going to repeal it, I really believe that bill could have been stopped.

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Instead, they didn't, and then when they were pushed and pushed and pushed—I remember watching Focus Ontario, and as aggressively as only the media could be, finally she said, "We're going to repeal the parts that are killing jobs," the Liberal leader said, after being pushed, pushed.

What does that mean? She wasn't specific. What parts is that? Anybody realizes that, to be more specific, we've said the first piece of legislation, we'll be repealing it, and we're not only going to do that, we're going to introduce secret ballot provisions so that we have democracy back in the union movement here in the province of Ontario. The Liberals attempt, I think, over the last little while, to be all things to all people, and unfortunately they please no one.

I look at the other measures they talk about here, introducing "measures to alleviate youth unemployment to give our 140,000 unemployed young people hope for the future." Well, that's terrific. I'm sure the NDP hopes for that as well. But we need to be specific. We need to have concrete proposals on how that is going to be done.

We've talked about it in our minority report. We've talked about the tax changes. We've talked about the situation with the wealth tax and the corporate minimum tax, saying we would not do it. We talk about freezing spending at the 1992-93 level. We have said very clearly that if we were in government, the spending in the province of Ontario would be frozen at the 1992-93 level. We would introduce a provision which would require a government to balance the budget at least once

during the term of office.

We talk about the solutions to some of the problems in terms of saving money. We've said what we would do is introduce the same provisions that Manitoba has done, under which civil servants were given additional days off without pay. In Manitoba, for example, they did it in the summer. Essential services would be exempt, but the Manitoba government has calculated that the program will reduce the salary by about 4%, and a similar program in Ontario would save about \$160 million if we did that. That doesn't make a lot of the civil servants happy in the province of Ontario, the hardworking men and women, but we have said: "We are going to be honest with you. If we were in government, this is what we would have to do. You might not like it, but this is what we would do."

The Liberals, of course, won't say that. They won't find \$160 million anywhere, other than the member for St Catharines to talk about some advertising that will save \$1 million. There's specifically \$160 million. By cutting back to the 1985 levels, we wouldn't be talking about millions of dollars; we would be talking about literally billions of dollars.

We talked about what we would do with social assistance in that we talk about the steps to recover, the recovery rate on welfare, abuses in payments. The recovery rate's only 3% versus 10%. We've said we would introduce the home visits, similar programs to what Quebec has done through its Bill 75 where it looked at the people who were on social assistance to see who in fact was abusing the system. And it isn't only us who is saying this, Mr Speaker. As you know, the auditor of this province said that the abuse is probably about 10% in social assistance, and at \$6.2 billion, we're looking at well over \$600 million that the auditor says is being lost through fraud and abuse within the system.

We talked about the moratorium in non-profit housing. We said that any new non-profit housing that has not already been started we would scrap. If you look at the savings in there, we'll spend \$1.2 billion annually subsidizing those things, and quite frankly in this day and age we cannot continue to put up the non-profit housing at two and a half times what the private sector can do.

We talk about some of the other provisions in terms of Bill 40. We talk about what we would do with WCB.

Not all these ideas were thought up by ourselves. What we have talked about doing is looking at other jurisdictions where successful programs have been put in place and taking those ideas and incorporating them.

We also talk about some of the other programs with the employee health payroll tax.

We are pleased that the Liberals are finally focusing on the economy. We don't want to get into a situation of

who's to blame for this, we're all in this together, but we need concrete solutions to our problems, and quite frankly I'd be surprised if the government side can't support things that are in here, other than the fact that, as they've done to the Conservatives, they've thrown in the odd cheap shot in there in terms of what they were doing. I guess in this political day and age, when they know that we're going to be the major opposition for forming the government, that's acceptable. But if you put aside the one- and two-line cheap shots, I don't think there's anything in here that the government can disagree with, and one of the reasons they can't disagree with it is that there is nothing specific in here.

If I have criticism of this motion in terms of the Liberals, I say to them, we need to have something more specific. We're in this together, we will cooperate and we will support motions even with the cheap shots that are in there about the Davis years and whatever, going back to Leslie Frost and John Robarts and whoever the Liberals believe created these problems. All I know is, during that period of time we had fewer people on welfare, we had more jobs, and we had an education system and a health care system that was the envy of the entire world.

I wish I could stand up today and say we had that. We do not, but we're not here to blame the Liberals or the NDP for their mismanagement because over the last little while I think if we were to get some concrete proposals and solutions from the Liberals, I think they'd be surprised at how we will support them. I know even in this resolution, even with the cheap shots regarding the Conservative Party and the federal Conservative Party, we still say that there are points in this resolution that we can support. They even go so far as to criticize the federal Conservative Party for its fiscal management and I, for one, believe that the last budget should have been tougher. If I had been the Minister of Finance I'd have been tougher and made some of the changes.

I sit back and reflect on how I got involved in politics. I remember it was in the early 1980s. I was getting in shape for training camp—I was at that time I guess with Quebec—and I used to go out for a run down by the lakeshore, right by the Globe and Mail box, and when I would come back I would pick up a Globe and Mail. I remember during that period of time coming back—and this is how I got into politics—reading the Globe and Mail as I got home, and I remember interest rates at that time were 21% under the federal Liberal government, under Pierre Trudeau, in the early 1980s. And I had to renew my mortgage, with a young family—I think only Lindsay was born there—at 21% because of the mismanagement of the federal Liberal Party.

It got me into politics. I don't know whether to be happy or sad for that on some days. But not only were there 21% mortgage rates, we had a postal strike

on—kind of ironic, similar to this government—where they wouldn't legislate the postal workers back to work. I remember Trudeau was in Africa worrying about the north-south issues, and I got so angry, so upset, I said, "That's it; I'm going to get involved in the political process." That year I must not have been running too fast, because I got to training camp, was the first one cut, and then got into politics.

I guess justice did come around, although as I was thinking later, this government and this Premier's term of office has almost been like my hockey career was: We're both a bunch of minor leaguers, and when his contract comes up in two years I'm sure it won't be renewed.

So when the Liberals talk about what the federal government is doing and the financial crisis they're under, I remember the spending that created the fiscal mess. If you look at 1984, over that period of time, if you look at the federal government, it was the interest payments that quite frankly created the problems.

What we're saying to this government is: Look at what happened federally. Trudeau's long gone; let's not blame him. He's long gone off the scene. But the same principles of running up the deficits that happened federally, we have to learn from them. That's why, two years ago when you were going to spend your way out of it, we said you can't because it gets gobbled up. Since 1984, on the current account balance, they haven't added one new cent to the deficit, but it is the interest payments alone that are going to gobble us up.

There are some things in here that I think all parties will agree with. I think if you take a look and get rid of the cheap shots that are given to both the other parties, there are some good ideas in here. I hope over the next little while they will be more specific when they have the opportunities, whether it's through the finance committee of the Legislature, to put some programs together, to be more specific about what they would do in government, and don't stand up day after day and say don't raise taxes, don't raise the deficit, but don't cut spending.

Quite frankly, there is a cynicism out there in the public. We all get tarred with the same brush and we have to be prepared to stand up, as we have done, and it's a non-political issue. We were the first ones to say that what was done in the province of Newfoundland under a Liberal government was the correct thing. You've heard our leader, Mike Harris, say when Frank McKenna, another Liberal, has done some good things in New Brunswick; he has stood up and complimented him. So it goes beyond ideology of just Liberal versus Conservative-NDP.

Even today, we said you should do as the Quebec government did yesterday: have the legislation ready in case these talks fail. That was the Liberal government. We're saying, follow that lead.

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So we're attempting to be non-partisan, to look at the issues, because, quite frankly—and I will close because I think I'm running over my time—people are not interested in philosophy or in political parties' ideology. They're interested in solutions.

And we want to be a part of that: We're going to applaud you when you do the right things; we're going to be there to stand up as firmly as anybody else when you don't do the right things. But at the end of the day, I honestly, truly believe we can get out of this if there's more cooperation, if there are concrete proposals and if the people who sit on the back benches on all sides will roll up their sleeves and get involved.

So we're not here to say "I told you so" during that period of time over the first two budgets, when we were, in some cases, in our actions very, very critical of you, but we will be there to make sure that some of the things that are done are leading us in the right direction.

If any of the members would like to see some of our ideas—and I know the Treasurer's probably read through it. The budget's coming down so it is probably already put to bed, but for some of the members who have not had a chance, I think you'll find that the 15 points in there—you won't agree with all of them, but there are some concrete solutions. We want to be a part of the solution.

I would just close by saying that the resolution has some good points. Let's get away from the cheap shots and let's get this province back, because if we don't, unfortunately, two years from now there'll be nothing left. Over the next little while we have to continue to work hard to make sure that this province leads this entire country in the economic recovery.

Those are my comments for today, and I thank the members for listening to me.

Mr Sutherland: I'm pleased to participate in this opposition day motion. Let me say, reading this motion reminds me of my days at Western on the student council. It must be some of those Liberals from Western who work for the other caucus who wrote this motion that goes all over the place.

I want to say, clear-cut, that I reject the premise of this motion that the opposition has put forward today. They are accusing this government of not being able to manage the situation, that we do not have a plan to deal with the most difficult economic times since the Great Depression.

I want to say today that this government does have a plan. It's a very good plan, it's a very solid plan, and my colleagues on this side who are going to participate in the debate today and myself are going to outline the components of that plan, just highlight a few of the components of that plan.

As I said earlier, we are in the most difficult econ-

omic times since the Great Depression, so in order to deal with those difficulties, we have to develop strategies. Our government has developed those strategies, and let me outline some of the main components: first of all, significant job creation through investment in public infrastructure, in our roads, in our water and sewage systems, in telecommunications; upgrading skills of our workforce, both through the Jobs Ontario Training program and through the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

I find it very interesting. When you look at the seven recommendations put forward in this opposition day motion, you go to number 4 and the Liberals are asking us to review the very successful Jobs Ontario Training program. You go to number 6 and what do they say to do? Focus on training and retraining. Well, they can't have it both ways. We are focused on training and retraining through that program.

As you remember from the throne speech, we're also going to be coming forward with initiatives to support community economic development.

We also have a very strong goal of preserving and maintaining our public services and of course, in order to do that, managing our finances very effectively. I'd like to elaborate a little more on how we are managing our finances effectively and will continue to do that.

In these difficult economic times, it is important to be investing in jobs, to be investing in our people, those who have lost their jobs as a result of the recession, to be investing in our youth, who are going to be our future, and at the same time, of course, preserving our most important public services. But in order to do this, we must continue to manage our finances and restrain the growth of the debt.

Before explaining our plan in terms of dealing with the finances, I would like to talk a little bit about where this province has been at and how we arrived at the current point.

First of all, as I said earlier, this is the worst recession since the 1930s. We've had large job loss and, may I say, unlike the last recession, far more of this job loss has been permanent. That job loss has been due to restructuring in general, adjustments to free trade and the impact of the free trade agreement; also, we've had to suffer through a very high Canadian dollar, and when we talk about interest rates, in terms of real interest rates, they've been very high and they've had a significant impact.

The result of all that is that unlike many other companies during difficult economic times, when there's less demand for their products and services, there's an increased demand for government services. We've certainly seen that, with the significant increase in the number of people who require social assistance in this province, the number of people who require our other

services, whether that be the increased need for training, for other types of adjustments etc.

I think it's also important to point out that there has been a three-year decline in the revenues of this government and of the province of Ontario. That's very important to point out because that is unprecedented. That is unprecedented.

Just to show you the difference, because we've heard a lot from both of the other parties about how well the Tories managed this province for 42 years, how well the Liberals managed it for the five years they were in government, during the last recession the worst year for revenue growth for the province was 1982-83. How much did revenues grow during that year? They grew 8.8%. So during the last recession, during the worst year for revenues for the province, they increased 8.8%. During the Liberals' five-year reign, the lowest revenue increase of any year was 10%. It was 8.8% when the Tories were there; 10% during the Liberals.

It's much easier to manage and deliver services and manage the economy when your revenues are increasing. So when the two opposition parties talk about what they did when they were in power, we need to understand that that situation is dramatically different from the situation this government had to face when it came into power. It's like comparing apples and oranges.

So what was the situation in 1990 when we came into government? We were entering into a period of high unemployment, slow economic growth and an unprecedented three-year decline in revenues, combined with the accumulated impact of reductions in federal transfer payments and, quite frankly, a system of public services that could only be funded and sustained if the rapid economic growth of the late 1980s continued at its high rate. Of course, we know that economic growth did not continue and the revenues weren't generated as people were out of work, they lost their jobs: retail sales tax down, personal income tax down, corporate tax down significantly.

Based on all that, it is our government which is having to manage through the most difficult period since the 1930s, and it is our government that is managing effectively.

Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough North): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I checked and it seems that there is no quorum here. I'm surprised that the government can't keep a quorum in this House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Would you please check if there is quorum.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is now present. The member for Oxford.

Mr Sutherland: As I was saying, we've had to make

the tough financial decisions. The 42 years of Conservative government, the five years of Liberal government, did not have to deal with the situation we have today which is forcing us to make tough decisions, tough financial decisions that, as I said earlier, need to be done in order for us to continue to invest in jobs, in people and in our public services and in our public infrastructure.

Our government has been and is taking a balanced approach to control the deficit because, quite frankly, as I think the Finance minister has outlined, we do not want interest payments to become the largest single program the government is providing. Interest payments do not help people specifically.

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How are we doing that? First of all, we've implemented an expenditure control plan of \$4 billion. Now, in the resolution and in the seven points, it talks about the government getting its financial house in order through reorganization and restructuring, elimination of waste. Of that expenditure control plan, the largest component, \$720 million, is internal savings, and that is coming through administrative streamlining, layering. For example, the Ministry of Community and Social Services had area offices and regional offices. The regional offices are being eliminated as part of the layering and destreaming process. We also have savings from the integration of the ministries, and of course some of the other things we're doing to control expenditures, the very successful job we did last year with health care in terms of, after 10 years of 10% increases, keeping that expenditure increase to 1%, with minimal job loss.

The other component of that, of course, is the social contract, in which we're going to have set a goal at \$2 billion. Unlike some of the opposition parties, we're going to do that through negotiating with our employees, because we believe the very hardworking, dedicated people who deliver our public services understand the problem and are willing to help with the solution and also have many, many good ideas as to how we can reach that \$2-billion target. We believe in partnership and negotiation with those folks.

The third component of the balanced approach is taxes. The Finance minister has indicated that there would be tax increases.

The opposition would like to kid the public that we could have no tax increases. I know personally I would prefer that there weren't any tax increases either, but I don't think we would be realistic with the people of Ontario if we said that and if we did that.

We understand, if we go back and look at the federal situation during the early 1980s and what the federal government did there, there were substantial increases in spending but there weren't the revenue increases to support that. You can do deficit financing, and we're

going to continue to do some deficit financing, but you've also got to be able to increase your revenues so that the debt doesn't get too far ahead of you. That's why there are going to have to be tax increases as well.

Look at the motion the Liberals have put forward. They have said in question period that they don't like our expenditure control plan, and they say in here that they don't want any taxes. So I guess what they want is for the deficit to run out of control. That is what they're promoting, like their federal counterparts did in the early 1980s.

Of course, if we didn't do that and the deficit ran out of control—no tax increases—there'd be even more substantial reduction in essential public services. We're going to ensure that, through these tax increases, they're done in a fair manner.

So through the expenditure control plan, the social contract and tax increases, this adds up to a balanced package of solutions to reduce our deficit and to continue to allow us to invest in jobs through Jobs Ontario Capital, in people through our Jobs Ontario Training and OTAB programs and also through the Jobs Ontario Youth, and set a path for regaining prosperity in this province.

We have a very comprehensive plan, and I look forward to my colleagues outlining more details of that plan.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I'm glad to be up on my feet today and I'm very glad to see the Treasurer here. I hope he had a very good trip to New Liskeard last week. As people realize, we gave him a very warm welcome and a very enthusiastic welcome, all 4,000 people voicing their concerns over the sort of slash-and-burn policy that this government has embarked upon.

I'm glad he's here, but I want to turn my guns, I'm afraid, to the only two Conservatives who are here right now, because day after day the Tories are talking about Liberal budgets and comparing their 42-year reign in Ontario and how fiscally responsible they were. If you look at the last five years of Tory reign in Ontario, and you take the five years of Liberal governments and you take a couple of years of the NDP budgets, and we've got one to come next week, the record, and I'm going to talk to the facts, speaks very differently from what the Conservatives have been saying.

In the Conservative budgets from 1981-85—this is at a time when unemployment was at 8.7% and jobs were being created at about 64,000 a year; the real growth in the economy at that time was 3.5%—what's interesting is that the deficits that the Conservatives were creating in their budgets, on an average, over those years were \$2.7 billion a budget. That's what the Tories were doing.

What was it when the Liberals were bringing forward these budgets that the Tories say, and sometimes the

government party says, were very big? They averaged \$1.9 billion. These figures, of course, are rather new and strange to the people of Ontario as of late, because of course we're now used to budget deficits as large as \$11.5 billion. In fact, that's the average of the first two NDP budgets that we've seen. We don't know what we're going to see next week, but we're going to see another big figure nowhere near \$1.9 billion.

What was the per cent of growth in spending at that time? The Tories were spending at 11.3% per year. We brought it down a bit; we were 9.9%. So we were pretty high. This government here, the NDP, is 7.8%. I think the real story, though, is the cost of this debt, and of course that's what this government wants to talk about: how much it costs to service the debt of this province. Basically, when the Tories were doing that, the average per cent growth in the debt was 11% a year. When we, the so-called big spend government, the Liberal government, was there for five years, it was only 5%. Of course, this government, the NDP government, in two years has now increased that to 24%. So if you look at the facts, these attacks are absolutely wrong. They're off base. They're not on target. I think that's important.

In the few minutes that I have remaining, I have to turn my guns on to what is happening over here in the Ontario government today, because town after town, community after community in Ontario is starting to feel the damage caused by the slash-and-burn policy of the NDP government.

The Treasurer is here, and I wish we had a shaman here who would relieve him of this virus that has struck him, this virus that he's got to cut this deficit. I think it's the W5 virus, is what it is. They must be hooked up to their VCRs, looking at this New Zealand bankruptcy story, and it's just hooked into them like a virus, and it's tenacious and it's not letting go. I think Mr Rae looks at this every day; I think Floyd Laughren, the Treasurer, must look at this every day, and they're getting hooked. They're just so afraid that they're going to be tagged as the government that brought Ontario down and smashed the Ontario economy.

So what are they going to do? They're taking a page from the Tories and they're going to slash and burn right across this province; association, municipality, institutions, it doesn't matter. What's a shame is that what they don't realize, and I wish they would, that it's not just your problem. We all helped to create this problem. It was part of the Liberal government's problem, part of the Tory government's problem, so why don't we all work together on this?

You don't have to fix it in six months. We could take some time and we could all work together, because it took 127 years to get here, to create this mess, all of us doing it. It's not just your fault. So why don't we all work together to alleviate this mess? Let's work together and take a few years and do it and not cause so much

pain to all the women and children and men across Ontario. That's what we need to do. Why don't we start having a social contract with the people of Ontario and not just the people who work directly for the government?

As I've mentioned many times in this House since April 23, which was called Black Friday in New Liskeard and Haileybury, in the Timiskaming district, this government, besides stopping the relocation of 200 Ministry of Natural Resources jobs that were really going to be the underpinning of the economy of south Timiskaming, also announced that it would close an institution that's been in existence in the town of New Liskeard for 70 years, the New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology, an institution that is on the forefront of northern research and development for agriculture in northern Ontario. The institution has really been the frontier of the Ontario government for 70 years in blazing the trail to increase the productivity of northern agriculture.

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Without very much thought, and from what I've heard, with only about 48 hours before the announcement, this government decided to close that institution. That was a bad decision and it's a decision that still today I do not accept. I've told the Treasurer today, as I've told him every day since he made that announcement on April 23, I will fight to the end to save that institution.

I'm glad the Treasurer, when he comes up, is going to listen to the community coalition group that wants to make a presentation to bring some proposals forth to the Treasurer to say how we can save this institution. I think it can be saved and I think we can do better. I think we can spend less. I think we can make it more cost-effective.

I'm sympathetic to your problem. I think we can bring in more revenues. I think maybe the vet lab up there which we need—we can make a profit centre for this government.

Let's talk about it. Let's give us a chance. Let's work together, and don't slash and burn right across Ontario. Yes, we've got a problem and we can work together on it. It's not just your problem so don't try to take all the blame for it. We'll work together on it and we'll do it together. That's what we have to do.

That's my plea today. Let's start to manage, let's start to talk, let's start to consult and let's start to work together as representatives of our constituents and not just adopt the party line. You all have responsibility over there for your constituencies and you should be representing those. You should be standing up, regardless of if you're a cabinet minister or a backbencher, and defending your constituents against this onslaught.

It's not right and I'm sure deep down in your

hearts—because I was one of you at one time, as you know—you know it's not right, what's happening. You know it's not right and it shouldn't be happening. I ask you to start working together with all three parties and the people of Ontario to make this happen in a much more sane way so we're not slashing and burning and destroying these jobs at a time when the economy is so fragile in Ontario. We need these jobs. We need government support right now. The last thing we need is the government of Ontario to abandon the people of Ontario.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I'm very pleased to join this debate today. I must admit that I just about had to fight to get some time to speak to this.

Clearly, we recognize there is a problem in this province. We have 550,000 people out of work. We have 214,000 people who have joined the unemployment lines since the NDP formed the government. It's a very serious situation and nobody in this House would underestimate it.

If the NDP government had listened to our advice, it wouldn't be in the situation it's in today, but I'm particularly interested in the wording of this motion brought today by the Liberals. The Liberals talk about the fact that the government is ignoring their request for fiscal restraint. Mr Speaker, you know the truth of the matter: The Liberals have not asked for any fiscal restraint, except for the last two months, simply because they don't know what direction they're going in. It's the old story: People who live in glass houses should not throw stones. That adage should be remembered by a party that had the most profligate government North America has seen in many decades.

Let's just examine the record. When the PCs left office, a serious recession was just behind us and the provincial debt had climbed to \$30 billion—\$30 billion since Confederation. I'm not proud of that, but I do put it in context: \$30 billion since Confederation.

However, what did the Liberals do? In a time when this economy was so overheated that it was recognized as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world—certainly not because of anything the Liberals had done. But in that time of record receipts of tax revenues, when nobody could have ever dreamed that taxes and revenue from taxes would climb so much—at the same time, this government added \$10 billion to the debt.

Now, anybody who follows economics would say that this was a bad idea: adding to the debt at a time of record revenues. The Liberals should have been paying off the debt, but they did nothing. They increased taxes 33 times and added \$10 billion to the debt. That's absolutely unacceptable.

Let's examine how the Liberals did it, and let's just look at the five-year average increase in expenditures of governments. The Liberals have talked about numbers,

but unfortunately they forgot to talk about inflation-adjusted numbers. During the five years that the Liberals were in power, after you inflation-adjust the increases, we get to a number of 5.04% year-over-year increase above inflation, whereas when we look at the last five years that the PCs were in office, inflation-adjusted again, we have 3.8%. These numbers are absolutely irrefutable. They are the facts. In other words, the Liberals were significantly worse than the Conservatives—significantly.

Now, the NDP, in its inimitable way—

The Deputy Speaker: On a point of order, the member for Scarborough North.

Mr Curling: On checking, Mr Speaker, I see no quorum in the House.

The Deputy Speaker: Is there a quorum in the House?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is now present, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum is now present.

Mr Turnbull: It's interesting that the Liberals, on their own opposition day, cannot even keep more than two people in the House. They're taking away their own time from the motion, but I guess they haven't figured that one out yet.

However, what did the NDP do with the increase year over year of expenditures? Inflation-adjusted, they spent 5.55%. So let's just recap those numbers. The PCs increased spending in this province, inflation-adjusted, by 3.8%, the Liberals increased spending by 5.04% and the NDP increased spending year over year 5.5%. In other words, the Liberals and the NDP were just about as bad as each other.

Let's just turn now to some of the wasteful programs that the Liberals suggest we should cut. They don't have any. They came forward with the recommendation in this motion that the government, and I'd like to just read a part of the motion, "Create an economic climate in which job creation and economic renewal are their number one priority." Well, that's motherhood and apple pie. I don't see any recommendations of any substance here, much in the same way as the Liberals did not have any substantial recommendations in the pre-budget consultations. We have a page—one page—of pre-budget recommendations, and we have a whole book from the PCs. I'll get to that in a moment.

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There's no doubt about it; we need to cut wasteful programs. We need to cut wasteful programs where they are not serving the purpose that they were intended for or if they can be delivered in a more efficient way.

The Liberals would have you believe that they brought in balanced budgets. Let's just talk about—

Interjections.

Mr Turnbull: I've got the bears a little stirred up. There was one balanced budget that the Liberals brought in. Now, the interesting thing was, when we turn back to the budget documents of the year that they brought in a balanced budget, which was 1989-90, they forecast a deficit of \$577 million. Through an amazing stroke of luck, the federal government transferred to them \$880 million more than they had anticipated. Do you know what, Mr Speaker? It managed to give them a \$90-million surplus.

Now, wait a minute; there's something wrong with these numbers. They don't add up. They were going to have a \$577-million deficit. They got from the federal government \$880 million more than was anticipated, and they ended up with a surplus of \$90 million. In other words, if they had not received this windfall payment from the federal government, they would have had a larger deficit that year than even they had anticipated.

Now, you will recall that the following year they told us, in that election year, that they were going to come in with a surplus. Do you remember that surplus, Mr Speaker? I know you do, because you were out on the hustings that year. That was the year they told us we'd have a surplus.

Then the NDP came in and my friend Floyd across there got the keys to the treasury. He had a look, and the cupboard was bare. First of all, there was going to be, he thought, maybe a \$700-million deficit. Then he checked again; it was a \$1.2-billion deficit. Then, when he really did all of the fine, detailed numbers, it was a \$3-billion deficit.

It's amazing that we have a party bringing forward a motion critical of other parties who just don't know how to do their math. The Liberal Party brought in 33 tax increases. They had windfall amounts of revenue. They added a \$10-billion deficit to the economy at the time that we had an overheated economy, and they told us that they could balance the budget. The only year they managed to balance the budget was when the feds bailed them out by Serendip.

But don't take my word for it. I'd like to read to you what the press said about it, and I'll quote from the Financial Times of May 29, 1989: "When Treasurer Bob Nixon tabled his recent budget, business groups denounced the Peterson budget in terms normally reserved for the socialistic hordes of the New Democratic Party."

John Bulloch, president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, blasted the Peterson regime as the most anti-business government he had dealt with in 20 years. "Peterson may dismiss business discontent over any of these issues as unwarranted, but the cumulative

impression is that of an anti-business agenda."

Then let's see what the Toronto Sun had to say on April 21, 1988:

"Parsimonious old farmer, my foot. Treasurer Bob Nixon yesterday plowed taxpayers into the ground and then stuck it to them with a gilt-edged pitchfork. But this budget also employs the oldest political trick in the book. It sticks it to the taxpayer in the first year of a majority government in the belief that the public has a short memory. A year ago, when the Liberals had only 51 seats and a minority government, Nixon said in his pre-election budget that fiscal responsibility meant no new taxes. Yesterday, with the economy still strong and the social needs precisely the same, Nixon, arguing fiscal responsibility, demanded the biggest tax grab in Ontario history."

Because time is running out, I can't read all of the press clippings. But I want to say that the recommendations that the Liberals have made to the government in terms of getting its own house in order are flimsy. They came forward in the pre-budget consultations with one sheet of paper. There are five recommendations on it, and there's an awful lot of white space on it. I'll read a couple of these recommendations:

"2. A budget with real fiscal restraint: We will be supportive of a budget that provides a plan for significant spending restraint. However, we will evaluate the spending restraints on the basis of (a) fairness, (b) sensitive planning, and (c) use of creative solutions."

Let me read number 4:

"Restoring public confidence: The budget should contain the proper signals and a plan to build public confidence."

That is the most flimsy document I've ever seen in my life.

This is our pre-budget document. In it, we have 15 very, very detailed recommendations. Not only does it take three pages of tightly typed text to put them out, but we go on to have a whole book laying out further details of it. Anybody who wishes to get a copy of the Liberal pre-budget document and the Conservative one should phone my office and I would be very happy for them to get a copy, I will send it to them, and they can be the judges. They can phone my office, 445-4040, and I will send it out, and I would like to hear back from the people who are listening to this debate or read the debate what they think of the lack of Liberal suggestions. There's no substance whatsoever.

In addition, we have put forward two documents recommending what the government should do and we have urged the government to follow those suggestions. In fairness, the Premier has recognized the fact that the Conservative Party, even though he does not agree with the recommendations it is putting forward, at least is making recommendations. We are not making empty

noises, suggesting one day that you should spend and the next day that you should save money. That is the basic problem with the Liberal Party. They don't know what direction they're going in.

In conclusion, I just want to say it is quite clear that the government has lost its way but we do believe that if it were to follow the detailed recommendations that the PC Party has put forward it can start getting back on to the rails. That being the case, we will always support them.

We don't agree with some of the things the government is doing, but we are always prepared to offer constructive recommendations, and we will continue to do so, because that is the politics of today, not the old politics of Liberals who only understand opposing.

I will in fact be voting in favour of the Liberal motion because I do believe that the government should get its fiscal house in order. But I do repeat that the Liberal Party should remember the old axiom: Those people who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): I want to focus in on the very simple wording of the motion, and the motion calls for the government to take a commonsense approach to managing the economy.

The people who are viewing this debate must see through the partisan claptrap of the opposition parties, and I want to put this in a very simple context, common sense. When you are running the budget of your family, you have to plan and the plan is very simple. You have to plan financially for the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. Prudent planning will include putting money aside for children's education and indeed perhaps even for an emergency fund.

Families who get into trouble fiscally, it usually results—and I say directly to the people of Ontario who are watching this debate—from overextending the ability of the family to pay for those things that it is in fact purchasing. If indeed the family overextends its lifestyle by expensive purchase, this is indeed very dangerous because if it is hit by difficulties, if there is a decline in revenue in the household, if there is unemployment, that family will suffer economic hardship, will have an inability to pay and will find itself in a real crisis.

1640

The family of Ontario is no different. We are a family which is in a situation because basically over the years our family has not planned well. Over successive Conservative and Liberal administrations, our province has been overextended. During a time of plenty, during a time when revenues were at a high, when the economy was booming—and I say this to both administrations, both Conservative and Liberal—there was a consistent policy: spend, add more new programs, lead the good life, live now, pay later. That's okay as long as the money is coming in. Hey, have a good time, have the

expensive holidays, have the luxuries, but be aware that the day of reckoning will come.

Always, new programs were added. Conservative administrations added program after program; Liberal administrations added program after program—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): You asked for them.

Mr Farnan: —not concerned about the over-extension of the family resources, not concerned about that, they simply continued to add programs, never taking programs off the table. No programs were scrutinized for efficiency, no programs were scrutinized in terms of real need and programs were not scrutinized in terms of cost-effectiveness.

Now, the member says, "But you, as an opposition party, asked for programs," and it is true, we did. But the people of Ontario know how to run a family budget and they know that previous Liberal and Conservative administrations continued to add these programs. And they may indeed say, "When New Democrats were asking for those programs, they may not have been too wise." Indeed, I asked the Treasurer only a couple of weeks back if he could tell me how much in new spending the Conservatives and Liberals asked for in the last 12 months, and he said it would be in the billions of dollars.

This cannot go on. This is a relatively young government, a government of a mere two and a half years. I heard the Conservatives talking about "since Confederation." Well, you guys didn't learn in over 100 years. We're here for two and a half years and we are giving you the substantive direction, the sound economic direction, of how to guide the family's resources. We are saying to you, we are saying to the Conservative Party and we're saying to the Liberal Party, and we're going beyond you to the people of Ontario, to the people of this province, and we are saying to the people of Ontario: "No more. We cannot overextend the debt of this province. We cannot overextend the ability to pay of this province."

We need to say that because I don't get phone calls from constituents saying, "Mike, I can't sleep tonight because of the provincial deficit." They don't phone me up with that, but they do phone me up with concerns about individual programs; how true. But you know, when that same individual looks at his bank account or looks at his Chargex bill and finds that suddenly the family is in financial crisis, a state of panic sets in, and what do they do? They sit down as a family and all of the family together tighten their belts—not one member of the family. They sit around the kitchen table, they take out their pencil and their paper and they say, "Okay, guys, how can we cooperate together as a family in order to address this particular need?" And the success of that kitchen table conference is the ability of the family to come together and that they all share in the

solution of coming up with positive, constructive solutions, so that the family's financial situation can be put back in order.

I am so proud of this Treasurer, so proud of this government, that a young government can come to power and say, "Hey." Since Confederation, the Conservatives never got the message; since Confederation, the Liberals never got the message. We in our first term of office are able to go to the people of Ontario and say: "You know, you can't live like that. You have to order your finances. You have to get your finances in order, and that means sacrifice." But we also say to the people of Ontario: "We are a family and we must all work together. The public sector, the private sector, business, labour, government itself, we must all work together constructively."

I have the confidence in my Treasurer and in this government that we will be addressing these efforts of fiscal restraint in a fair manner and a just manner. We will be working to protect jobs. We will be working to ensure that services are maintained. We will be doing our very best to ensure that this is done as fairly and equitably and with as great a degree of justice as possible, but do it we will, because we are saying to the people of Ontario:

"Whatever happened with the Liberals, whatever happened with the Conservatives, we are determined to get the books in order. We are determined to put Ontario back into a sound fiscal, responsible position, a position that was allowed to happen because we were overextended, so that when we were hit by the recession we didn't have the resources to pay for all of the programs that the Conservatives and Liberals have layered over and over on top of each other." We are saying, "Now is the time for efficiency. Now is the time to examine programs for real need. Now is the time for cost-effectiveness."

This Treasurer and this government have set a course for the people of Ontario, and do you know why the people of Ontario are going to support the course of this government? Because it makes good common sense. They will see that what we are doing is exactly what they do when they sit around the kitchen table and say, "Hey, we've got a problem; we've got to do something about it." Well, we have a problem in the province of Ontario. This Treasurer, this government, we're going to do something about it on behalf of the people.

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I'm very happy to stand up and speak on this debate, extremely happy, and I'm even more happy that the Treasurer is here today to listen to some of this—pardon me, the Minister of Finance.

Mr Wayne Lessard (Windsor-Walkerville): If you're happy, we're happy.

Mr Cordiano: Well, it's a happy day indeed. I must say, all of us being happy today, let's get right into this

debate, which I think is one of the more significant debates that we will have in this Legislature because it enumerates entirely what is wrong with the government's prescription for dealing with the economy. It is entirely a very factual enumeration of what is wrong, it's very detailed, and furthermore, it also lists what can be done to improve the situation. So it's not just the usual diatribe that we hear from the third party about how it's going to hack, slash and literally destroy just about everything in sight, because I've got to tell you, Mr Speaker, Mike Harris's prescription for how to cure our ills—members will forgive me for this—is a simpleton's prescription.

Mr Stockwell: A what?

Mr Cordiano: A simpleton's prescription. It is very simple-minded in its approach. It fails to realize that there are very complex issues that we are dealing with. Yet this third party and Mike Harris would like people to believe that the world is easily fixable, just like a mechanic would tinker with your car and give you a tuneup. He thinks he's dealing with a clunker from back in the 1970s—

Mr Stockwell: We are at the kitchen table and now we are in the car. Can we talk about the economy?

Mr Cordiano: They are cars that still have carburetors and are not fuel-injected as they are today. But we're talking about an economy that needs a technician, that needs up-to-date information, up-to-date views on how to deal with very difficult circumstances.

1650

Of course, we can forget about this administration having any idea as to how to approach that, with all due respect to my friend the Finance minister, who's sitting in the House. I know he makes every effort. Of course, his colleagues don't always agree with some of the prescriptions that have been put forward. I know privately that he's making every effort these days, but it's an uphill battle and it's still nowhere near what needs to be done, nowhere near.

I might add that the social contract talks attempt to obfuscate what the reality is out there, attempt to obfuscate the real facts of the situation. The fact is that you need to deal with matters in a straightforward way, you need to come clean with people in this province, and this is something that has been said to the administration over the last number of years.

You have been running huge deficits, wildly out-of-control spending. You tried to spend us out of this recession in the first few years and realized that you would go bankrupt trying to succeed. Having realized that now, the government comes back and says, "We need to do something drastic." Well, lo and behold, that's precisely the wrong thing at this time when we're coming out of a recession, in some form of recovery, and this government's going to attempt to shell-shock

everybody into submission with whatever it's putting forward these days.

A \$17-billion deficit scare is the big stick they're attempting to use, and that's fine if that were the real situation. We don't believe that's the case. We believe that in fact the deficit has been overstated. That \$17-billion deficit figure is probably \$2 billion or \$3 billion or \$4 billion higher than we think even this government could manage to make it, that in fact when it gets its budget straightened out and brings about these cuts it's talked about, it'll bring in a budget deficit that's under \$10 billion. And we believe that is possible and achievable, given that they've set such high expectations for everybody. Now they're going to come in with a deficit that's under \$10 billion and they're going to say: "Aren't we wonderful? We brought our house under control."

Well, far from it, because in fact the economy is stalled, and if we do see some numbers that are improving, they're generally anaemic at best. In fact, this economy doesn't really have much going for it in Ontario, and this government isn't doing much to encourage additional investment so that we get real job creation.

But turning back to my friends in the third party, they would have people believe that, over the years when they were in government, managed the affairs of this province in a way which they feel has been better than anybody else. I say that's just silly, that's obviously silly. We know that the previous administration under the third party, the Conservative government that was in office when we defeated it in 1985, had run its course. And boy, what a run they had, at 42 years in power. They were largely a bunch that was anaemic in terms of their views, their new ideas. They had grown stale, they had grown stagnant. There was just deep inertia all around. Quite frankly, that administration was dead and was looking to revitalize itself with a leadership review back in 1985, but failed miserably.

What was the legacy of 42 years of Conservative rule? The average budget deficit was well over \$2 billion a year for the last five years of their administration. When we took office, their budget deficit was somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$3 billion. I know Mike Harris likes to stand up and say, "We had a lower deficit figure." Well, if you take the deficit figure of that time and apply it against revenues, it was a huge amount, in the order of 13%, 14% of revenues. That was a huge amount of money.

Coming into office, the Liberal administration in 1985, a recovery had been under way. There's no doubt that between the years 1985 and 1990 we had the best economic times. But I say this: The Liberal administration of the time believed in a pay-as-you-go fiscal policy, so that for everything we spent we brought in revenues to pay for it.

I've got to say to my friends in the third party, the surplus that was accumulated, there were funds there to pay down the accumulated deficit by about \$435 million in the year we did that. I say to my friends in the third party, that is a far better cry in terms of deficit control than they could ever boast.

We're getting into a war about who did what around this place, because Mike Harris insists on dealing with matters in a simple-like fashion, which is the only way he can understand these matters.

Mr Stockwell: I was going to speak just briefly on the motion, but that last speech certainly leaves you without breath when a member can accuse a leader of being simple-minded and simple when it comes to economic policies. I don't think that's a reasonable way to debate today, and I also don't think his issues—

Mr Cordiano: On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr Stockwell: Will you stop the clock, Mr Speaker?

Mr Cordiano: I think the record will show that I said that the leader of the third party had simple-minded views—

The Deputy Speaker: This is not a point of order.

Mr Cordiano: —rather than that he was simple-minded.

The Deputy Speaker: This is not a point of order.

Mr Stockwell: Well, okay. If that's a clarification, then it was clearly lost. I don't understand the difference, but let's leave it at that.

Firstly, I just want to deal with the balanced budget approach that was taken by the previous administration. Look, I am not going to sit here and debate this document that the Conservatives, during 1980 to 1985, were fiscally responsible. I don't particularly think they were. I don't particularly think they had cornered the market on fiscal responsibility. A \$15-billion budget with a \$2-billion deficit is not what I consider to be a fiscally responsible administration, and I don't think anyone would argue that on this side of the House on behalf of this party.

I think they had lost touch with the people, they had lost touch with the community, and maybe at that point in time they deserved to lose the election. Of course, we all know that when the voters speak, the electorate is never wrong, and we lost power because of that.

The member who spoke previously, speaking about a balanced budget and "We taxed properly"—that's just not true. In the five years they were in power, from 1985 to 1990, they acquired \$10 billion of new debt. It's not a debate—

Mr Mahoney: Nine.

Mr Stockwell: Nine billion. It's not a debate, it's a factual matter, and the question is put—

Mr Mahoney: Ten to your 30.

Mr Stockwell: Ten to our 30, and we were in power

some 42 years. If the member had been listening, I was just saying that I'm not defending the Conservative administration from 1980 to 1985, as I would not expect you to defend the Liberal administration from 1985 to 1990. Clearly, the people didn't think you were doing a very good job and they voted you out. If they had wanted you to stay and had wanted you to continue with that kind of administration, they would have voted you back into power. It didn't happen.

I don't think the people of this province are very enamoured at this time with this government. I don't think the people believe, according to the last two polls that I saw in St George-St David and Don Mills, that this government is doing such a bang-up job on the finances of this province.

I think we all have a lesson to learn. We all have a lesson to learn in this House, and that lesson is: Simply because you as a party did this some 15 years ago, in some instances, or 13 years ago, and some seven or eight years ago, and even a couple of years ago, it's better that you admit that you made a mistake and maybe mishandled the situation than try to defend the indefensible.

The people of this province weren't happy with 33 tax hikes, and it's probably better that the previous administration come forward and admit it and cleanse themselves. We made a mistake. I think we, from 1980 to 1985, we as an administration, lost contact with the public. We lost their respect. They thought maybe we were somewhat arrogant. We have to accept that fact because the electorate is never wrong.

1700

As to this government today, of the last two opinion polls and the rolling polls that I think everyone receives from the professionals out there, it's pretty clear that they're not exactly the fair-haired people of the province of Ontario. In fact, I would suggest that if an election were held today, it would be hard-pressed to gain official party status within these four walls.

I think you yourself have probably figured that out, looking at where your new seat is, and maybe a few others have figured that out. Maybe this government has figured it out by doing such an about-face on its fiscal attitude in the last three or four months, finally discovering that this deficit-debt crisis, which it thrust itself into, is a very serious economic concern.

My one point that I'd like to make in the few short minutes that I have to comment, is that I honestly don't believe this government would be making the decisions it's making today if it weren't for the bond-rating companies. I think the bond-rating companies have forced them into these decisions that are very unpleasant, uncharacteristic and not within the policy that this party has lived within.

Mr Mahoney: It's very Tory.

Mr Stockwell: It is rather a Conservative approach. In some instances, we don't believe it goes far enough. In others, we think they could make some adjustments that would make it better.

I say to my friends on this side of the House, I honestly don't think that your particular attitudes towards this administration and your reports that you put out on financing are very fair, concise or reasonable either. I read your minority report on the finance committee, and it is just simply without substance, without foundation. I think you've got to answer to the public about those kinds of reports, because—

Hon Mr Laughren: Simple-minded.

Mr Stockwell: I won't use that word, because I don't believe they are simple-minded. But I think you're going to have to answer to the people, because I don't think the people are going to buy into these hollow promises and these vows that we take every six weeks for every four or five years.

They're not going to buy into the fact that you can solve all the problems with a magic wand. They're not going to buy into the fact that all of a sudden these social democrats have become fiscal conservatives. I don't think, no matter how many new suits you buy, they're going to buy into this conversion.

Mr Mahoney: They're rented.

Mr Stockwell: They may well be rented. They're due back in June 1995, as I understand it.

I think we all need a big dose of reality. If you're going to start talking about the financial mismanagement, we're going to have to talk about the government, we're going to have to talk about the previous administration and we're going to have to talk about our policy initiatives.

I think we've offered some up, maybe not popular but realistic. I would ask the previous administration, the Liberal Party, to come up with a little more concrete attitude when it comes to fiscal conservatives.

Ms Zanana L. Akande (St Andrew-St Patrick): I noted in the member's motion that she was talking about renewal, about renewing the economy, about getting people back to work, and it's within the NDP's plan to get people back to work that I rise to speak to the House this afternoon. It is in fact a very important part of the plan of our particular party and our government.

You know of course that youth represent 18.1% of the Ontario labour force and that youth have borne almost all the significant job loss. It accounts for 85% of the net decline in employment. It's a tragedy. It's a sad situation. But realistically, it is not a situation that is totally the responsibility or the fault of this particular government. It is something which has grown to this extent.

All of us know that we are in a recession. All of us know that in fact our youth will be bearing the brunt of that recession. We know that there are people coming

out of universities, people who have to find funds in order to return to university and to college and to high school. We know that some of the graduates are concerned about the kinds of situations that they will be facing summer after summer, and in the longer term, year after year.

Because we know that the preparation of these people and the opportunities for youth is a significant part of what must be done in our renewal, in our development of this economy, of our management, of our putting Ontarians back to work, we have put significant funds, additional funds, into what already went to youth employment summer programs.

Last summer, we put an additional \$21 million to create 9,551 job placements, and it is significant to mention that's 1,051 more than were actually targeted, and how we did that is an important message. We did that through cooperation with the employers. We did that through cooperation with small business. Many of the small businesses told us that without that money, without that support, they would have been unable to employ any youth and they would have been unable to extend and develop their businesses. We did that through the support of community agencies that worked as job brokers and assisted us in finding employers who were happy, who were willing and who wanted and needed the employment of these youths.

Let me tell you that many of these youths continue to be employed today. In one agency, in fact, 60 of the 300 youths who achieved summer employment were maintained in those positions and still continue to work for those employers.

Let me tell you also that many of the youths have summer employment not only from last year, but they have weekend employment; they are called there on Christmas holidays; they work there during the March break; they work there at peak times for those community employers, because many of the small business employers employ people from the very community in which their business is situated.

It's particularly important to note that the employers feel a responsibility to not only support these youths in providing for them the jobs and giving them the opportunity to work for them; they feel the responsibility to help teach those youths about the jobs and about opportunities that they will have after they graduate. They take an interest in them. They develop a rapport. They develop mentorships.

We have many letters from students who have said to us: "Without this employment, I would not have been able to return to school. But more than that, I have found employment in an industry in which I hope to be involved in the future, and I have found a friend in the employer."

It is a story that is not just about jobs, that is not just

about supporting youths while they learn a new trade; it is a story about people accepting responsibility for the development of the youth in this country. That is a story in which this government is proud to be a motivating factor and a part.

We also have letters from the employers who tell us that the calibre of youth they employed was such that they would do it again and again. In fact, they have come back this summer to find youths to be employed.

Last summer, with the additional 9,551 jobs, in total, there were in excess of 26,000 youths employed in that summer. This year, this government has dedicated \$25 million to create, in addition to the jobs that are already out there, 10,000 job placements for the unemployed youths. I tell you, Mr Speaker, it is my expectation, in fact I feel very strongly, that I will be able to report to this House that we have employed more than those 10,000 youths.

We will do it as we did it last year. We will ask for the support of the employers. We will ask for the support of the community workers. We will certainly work with those youth employment centres and with the Futures offices, and we will provide jobs in excess of the number 10,000 that we have allocated the money to.

In addition to that, the government has allocated certain moneys that will go to sustaining and developing the Futures offices. It's interesting to me that that's one of the recommendations the member has made in the opposition. We had thought of that, known that it was necessary and decided to do that long before, because we recognize that these offices support youth not only in their summer employment program, but in the programs that they provide for youth all year long.

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It's a significant growth, but one point I must make about the summer programs we provided last year and the ones we are doing this year is that we have done something significantly different, something which the Liberals did not do, something which the Progressive Conservative governments of the past failed to do.

We have in fact implemented the program in ways that ensure that equity will be there, that all youth—white youth, black youth, youth from all places—will be employed, that all of them will be employed according to the experience they have, the expertise they have, that all of them will have an opportunity to serve according to their abilities and their gifts.

This is not a quick fix. This is not a Band-Aid program. This is an important part of an extensive, inclusive plan which seeks not only to put youth back to work, but also to address this province as it exists, all of us working well as we can contribute. Equity, Mr Speaker; equity and employment. It's been done by this government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Further debate? The honourable member for Eglinton.

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): Today I'd like to debunk a few myths that have been out there about this province's fiscal situation and who contributed to it.

The first myth I'd like to talk about is that of restraint. Now, if you listened to the NDP and you listened to the Conservatives, you would think that the Liberals hadn't heard of restraint. They obviously haven't been listening to what we've been saying for years.

In fact, Mr Speaker, I'd like to share with you a quote from the NDP. This was in the spring of 1990. It was the pre-budget consultations. The NDP published a report afterwards, and this is what they had to say about the Liberals and restraint. Remember, this is the NDP talking, a direct quote:

"The Ontario government," that is, the Liberal government, "has reacted to predictions of an economic slowdown by dropping its 'liberal' pretence and showing its true 'conservative' nature. The Liberal government is now spreading the message that 1990 will be a year of financial restraint. The Liberal majority on the finance committee agrees with this conservative philosophy and has recommended a course of restraint."

"The New Democratic Party challenges this defence of the status quo by calling on the government to implement reform policies needed to bring fairness to our society."

The Liberal government, in the spring of 1990, looking at an economic downturn on the horizon, was talking about restraint. We called for it then and we called for it in the spring of 1991, when this Treasurer brought in his first budget. The Treasurer, who is now called the Finance minister, decided that he was going to spend his way out of the recession. If you remember that, that meant a \$10-billion deficit which by year-end grew to over \$11 billion.

The problem is that they have now seen the light, they've seen the light on the road to Damascus, but some two years too late. By the time they decided that to spend their way out of recession wasn't working, we were in such dire straits that they then panicked and threw the province into chaos with their slash-and-burn policies.

The second myth I'd like to address today, which perhaps the Treasurer would agree with—the second myth I'd like to debunk—is the fact that the Conservatives are the party to best dig us out of the fiscal mess.

Hon Mr Laughren: All right.

Ms Poole: I knew the Treasurer would agree with that particular one.

The record shows something very, very different. The record shows that when the Tories were in power, they did not balance the budget. In fact, they ran 15 straight years of deficit the last 15 years the Tories were in

power. During their five last years in power, with Harris sitting at the cabinet table, the Tories averaged deficits of \$2.1 billion, 33% higher than those of the Liberals. When the Conservatives left the government, they left Ontario with a \$30-billion deficit, a \$2.6-billion annual operating deficit.

Hon Mr Laughren: Where are the Tories?

Ms Poole: The Tories, who don't appear to be evident right now, they preach fiscal responsibility, they preach fiscal restraint, but the fact of the matter is they certainly didn't practise it when they were in power.

I'd like to read portions of an article by Rory Leishman, the national affairs editor for the London Free Press. He asked the question: Who is the best party to clean up the fiscal mess? He said, "Well, you might think the Conservatives," but then he said, "but not necessarily." I'll quote from his article. He says:

"Fiscal responsibility knows no ideological bounds. It was extravagant spending by the Progressive Conservative government of former Premier Grant Devine that left Saskatchewan with the worst fiscal problem in the country."

Likewise, it was the "conservative National party that drove New Zealand to the brink of bankruptcy, by running up an annual deficit equivalent to 10% of gross domestic product in 1984."

Then he goes on to talk about the Conservative government and how, after nine years in power, it failed to eliminate the debt and the deficit. But in fact, and this is not in the article but it is historic fact, the Conservatives in the federal Parliament, who promised, who went into Parliament, who went into government promising to eliminate the deficit, they doubled the debt in the nine years they've been in power.

Back to Mr Leishman's article. He asked the question: Is there any reason to believe a Conservative government of Ontario, headed by Mike Harris, would do any better? "Not on the basis of Harris's current priorities....Specifically, the Ontario Conservatives' plan calls for a one-percentage-point reduction in the provincial sales tax to 7%; a 10% cut in gasoline and fuel taxes; and phased elimination over two years of the employer health tax for all firms with payrolls of less than \$400,000. Once fully adopted, these measures would cost the provincial Treasury more than \$1.5 billion a year in lost revenue."

This is an editorial comment from me: This is from a man who has pledged that he is going to eliminate Ontario's deficit within three years if he's elected and, secondly, he's going to do it without raising taxes. So he's already said he's prepared to accept \$1.5 billion in lost revenue.

Back to the article. "Is this a sensible proposal at a time when the Rae government is expecting a record \$12-billion provincial deficit? Harris professes to think so." Then he describes in his article about how Mike

Harris had said that he would take spending back to where it was in 1985.

Hon Mr Laughren: Back to the Stone Age.

Ms Poole: "Back to the Stone Age," has said the Finance minister. This is Mr Leishman's conclusion:

"However beguiling this scenario might be, it's unrealistic. Barring a full-blown credit crisis, there is no way any government could generate political support for the severe cuts that would be needed to reduce provincial spending to the same level as 1985.

"What would Harris do: roll back wages for teachers, hospital workers and other public sector employees to 1985 levels? Good luck to him....This year, the total exceeds \$17 billion. How would Harris slash \$5 billion to \$6 billion in annual health care spending while also fulfilling his promise to preserve a single-tier health care system that provides high quality, comprehensive and universal coverage?"

That's the Tories. As far as the tax fighter, the self-proclaimed tax fighter, who says that he doesn't believe in taxes, Mike Harris was a member of the cabinet. He voted for 16 tax increases from 1981-84, totalling more than \$1.8 billion. Is that his fiscal restraint? The Tories are very good at talking about 33 Liberal tax increases over the term of our government. They never once mentioned the fact that there were 27 tax decreases during that same period. They forgot that little piece of math.

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When the Tories are talking about spending, you have to take it tongue in cheek, because, I'll tell you, there was no one on the front lines more than the Tories when we were in government, who were insisting our government wasn't spending enough. They said: "Spend more on health care. Spend more on the environment. Spend more on education. Spend more on social services." And you know what? They said, "Spend more on housing." I read into the record some time ago some quotes from members of the Conservative caucus in the last government when the member for Nipissing, if you can believe this, the leader of the Conservative Party, called for non-profit housing in his riding. We can't count the number of times the member for Mississauga South stood up and asked for more non-profit housing. The member for Markham, the former leader of the Conservative Party, Andy Brandt, they all stood up in this Legislature and asked for more non-profit housing, and then they have the gall to criticize the Liberal and NDP caucuses for supporting non-profit housing during our regimes.

If people say that they're going to believe the Tories when they make these promises of fiscal restraint, restraint in spending, when they're going to control the deficit, they're going to reduce taxes, I'll tell you, they can believe them as much as they believed Mike Harris during the leadership.

At that time, what did Mike Harris say? He said that he would scrap rent controls. He said that he would bring in user fees for health care. He said that he would change seniors' benefits. I ran in the election in 1990. That man was leader of the Conservative Party.

Did he keep one of those promises? Not one of them. In fact they hedged on every single one of them. And when we brought his record up and read from the record on the election trail, they said: "No, no, no. That wasn't what we meant. We didn't mean scrap rent controls. We meant, well, we'd bring in something else. We're not sure what it would be, but we'd bring in something else."

We didn't hear what they were going to do to seniors at that time. We didn't hear what they were going to do to the universality of the health care system, because the Conservatives are very convenient at forgetting their promises.

So when all is said and done, you have to decide who you're going to believe, and I say, be very wary of believing the Conservative Party.

I'd like to close with a quote from the Toronto Sun, and I've got the original here, because my father happens to be a pack-rat and I saw it up at the cottage not very long ago. Thursday, December 26, 1985. Okay? The Liberal government in power. I read this, "Government Hikes Budget 42.1%," and I thought: "My God, that's when we were in government. What did we do?"

I read on: "In a classic case of do as I say, not as I do, Queen's Park will hike its annual legislative budget by 42.1% this year." Then they go on to say: "The 42.1% hike for the Ontario Legislature is the largest percentage increase recorded in Canada." Then it says, "The study says Ontario's 'sizeable increase' is due mainly to the expansion of services to MPPs, including a new office computer system." It goes on to talk about the growth in the government caucus office staff, the opposition staff and how this has been increased.

Mr Speaker, you know the irony? It says, "The measure was pushed through by the Tories with NDP backing over Liberal objections just before the Conservatives fell from power."

That's the truth. When these people and these people accuse the Liberals of increasing the size of government, it wasn't the Liberal caucus that did that; it wasn't the Liberal government. The Liberal government voted against it.

So the moral of this story is, there are myths out there. The people of Ontario should learn for themselves what the truth is, because listening to the Conservatives will not give you the true story.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate? The honourable member for Nickel Belt.

Hon Mr Laughren: I am pleased to take part in this opposition day debate brought forth by the official

opposition. I've been somewhat bemused by some of the arguments that have been brought forth by members opposite, but it is rather refreshing to hear the Liberal official opposition beating up on the third party and vice versa; turning their guns on one another rather than on the government.

I must say that when I looked at the wording of the opposition motion I found it very strange. The Liberals argue early on in their opposition motion that, "Whereas for over two years, the NDP government ignored the Liberal caucus's calls for fiscal restraint." I don't know where that came from, but for the Liberals to accuse anybody of not exercising restraint is really an argument from loony land; it really is.

I keep track in this House of the demands from opposition members to spend more money. The official opposition—I just made a list of very few here, because I don't want to take up too much time of the House, but I'm glad the leader of the official opposition is in the House, and I welcome her here. She's been calling for more money for municipal employment programs, for training, for long-term job creation; the member for York North has been calling on government spending to stimulate the economy; the member for Halton Centre wants more money for health care and hospitals; the member for York North wants more money for social assistance; the member for Bruce wants more money for municipalities and schools; and the member for Scarborough-Agincourt wants more money on job creation.

Those are all admirable calls. I appreciate that they're all good causes, but where the official opposition loses its credibility is one day it's calling for these expenditure increases and the next day it's tabling a motion telling us that we haven't listened to its calls for fiscal restraint. Could we have just a dash of consistency from the official opposition from time to time? Just a dash; that's all. I really do find it passing strange.

The Liberals say in their motion, too, that the Conservative Party ran deficits for 15 years. Beating up on the Conservatives they are, today. I should remind members in this assembly that when the Liberals governed—I heard the member for Eglinton talk about how the devil made them do it when they increased government spending, that it wasn't the government that did it. They were the government, but it wasn't them that did it. I don't know how that system works; I guess it really was the devil.

But for the Liberals to talk about anybody running a deficit when they, in the five most prosperous years ever in this province—when natural increases in revenue were flowing in. There was one year when the Liberals got \$1 billion extra from Ottawa that they were not expecting. At the same time, during the five years the Liberals were in office they increased the debt from \$30 billion to \$40 billion, a 33% increase in prosperous times.

So here we are, trying to deal with the worst recession since the 1930s and, yes, indeed we have run up very substantial deficits, but I can tell you, we didn't do it in the most prosperous times this province has ever seen. That's what the Liberals did. I'm sorry, my friends, you cannot have it both ways; you cannot accuse us we're not exercising fiscal restraint when in the best of all possible times you increased the total debt of this province by 33% in five short years—at the best of all possible times. So we have increased the deficit substantially in the worst recession since the 1930s. Of course we have. You did it in the best times since the 1930s. There's a big difference, my friends.

I don't really understand why the official opposition thought it could get away with this kind of motion, given its track record when it was in government and, quite frankly, given its track record in opposition. Here you are calling for restraint while day after day after day you're calling on us to spend more money. At least the Conservative Party, the third party, is consistent in what it demands in this assembly. What the Conservatives call on us day after day to do is to cut spending on virtually all programs across government and to legislate reductions in the public sector compensation. There is at least some consistency. I think it's a Neanderthal consistency, but at least it's consistency.

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But the official opposition—now, I know that consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds, I've heard that expressed, but at the same time, in the assembly I think that the people in this province are sick and tired of having the Liberals promise one thing one day and demand something else the next day. They're getting tired of it, my friends. You can't continue to get away with it.

The Liberal opposition motion calls on this government—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. I would ask the Treasurer to please take his seat. Order, please. The honourable member for Nickel Belt has the floor.

Hon Mr Laughren: Mr Speaker, I didn't mean to tease the bears this afternoon. I was going to try and be most restrained, but it doesn't take much to get them going.

The Liberal motion calls upon the government to create an economic climate in which job creation and economic renewal are the number one priority. From the day we formed the government, that's exactly what's been the number one priority of this government, number one, and continues to be.

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): Why are there more people unemployed today than in the history of this province? Why is that? Why are there more people unemployed than ever?

Hon Mr Laughren: For the Liberals not to understand, for the official opposition not to understand that this jurisdiction and others are facing the worst recession since the 1930s—and I don't know how it is that the Finance critic of the official opposition wouldn't understand what got us into this recession in the first place. It wasn't his government that put us in the recession, it was the federal Tories in Ottawa that put us into this recession, and for the critic of the official opposition not to understand that leads me to suggest to the leader of the official opposition, perhaps you need a new critic for the official opposition.

Ms Poole: We don't need a new critic. You need a new Finance minister.

Hon Mr Laughren: I expected you to call for that. The motion calls on the government to "get its own fiscal house in order through genuine reorganization and restructuring and elimination of waste in order to get the deficit under control." That's exactly what we are doing. I mean, what does the official opposition think that our expenditure reduction program is all about, that the social contract plan is all about and that the budget is going to be all about next Wednesday? That's exactly what it's all about, and I thought the official opposition understood that. That's exactly what we're trying to do.

What I think rots the socks of the official opposition is the fact that we are tackling a problem that they never had the courage to tackle. That's what's really bothering them over there. You knew we were heading for trouble and you did absolutely nothing about it except layer program on program on program for the five years that you were the government. That's the problem, and we, for the first time as a government in this province, are trying to address the problem of the growing deficit and waste and layer upon layer in the public sector.

And we're doing it. It's very tough, but we are very serious about it. I've never known any other government to tackle the problem of the size of the public sector or of expenditures the way this government has done, because we've—

Mr Phillips: Nobody has created a problem like you have.

Mr North: You walked away from it.

Hon Mr Laughren: Yes, the official opposition, after less than three years in power with a majority government, rather than staying and dealing with the problem, you called an election, you ran away from the problem. That's what you did. That's exactly what you did, and the people of this province will not forget that.

To the member for Scarborough-Agincourt, my critic, who I think is a good critic—and I take back any comment I said about that; it was a certain rhetorical flourish, because I do believe that the member for Scarborough-Agincourt is a thorough and hardworking critic and I didn't mean to malign him personally.

The official opposition motion says that we should refuse to increase taxes in order to protect the fragile economic recovery. Well, if there's one thing the people in this province don't want to hear, it's absolute nonsense like that. They don't want a George Bush, "Read my lips, no new taxes" line. That's not what the people of this province want. I understand that nobody wants new taxes. Nobody wants new taxes; I understand that.

But I also believe that the responsible thing to do in this province now is to have a balanced approach to getting the deficit down, and that balanced approach includes expenditure reductions, and we've tackled it by reducing the expenditure growth by \$4 billion this year; we are addressing the problem of compensation in the public sector by putting \$2 billion on the social contract table, and we're going to get that \$2 billion; and we're going to round off this balanced approach by increasing revenues in the budget that'll come down next Wednesday. That is a responsible and fair approach to dealing with our fiscal problems in this province.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): That's what Robin Hood said too. You should be in Sherwood Forest.

Hon Mr Laughren: Well, that's exactly what we're doing. The Liberal opposition calls on us to focus on training and retraining to help get people back to work. No government has ever spent the money we've spent on retraining and apprenticeship programs, in the middle of the most severe recession. We increased spending on retraining and apprenticeship programs by 24% last year and we had to start almost from scratch, because when the official opposition was in power, they didn't lay the base for a proper training, retraining and apprenticeship program. We've had to do it; that's why.

The final part of the resolution says that we should "introduce measures to alleviate youth unemployment to give our 140,000 unemployed young people hope for the future." Well, we are spending this year about \$180,000 on youth employment across various programs and ministries. No government has ever spent more. I think you are simply engaging in hollow rhetoric for the sake of the rhetoric itself, not dealing with the problems in this province.

I recall very clearly that the leader of the official opposition, when she became the leader, said that she was going to be a leader with a difference, that she saw her responsibility as the leader of the official opposition not just to criticize, but to bring forth alternatives. In the document—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Laughren: Mr Speaker, I'll try and—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Laughren: The official opposition, I believe, understands—I hope they understand—that a \$16-billion or \$17-billion deficit is unacceptable. I have

never heard them say that it's an acceptable level of deficit. They might quarrel with our numbers and so forth, but I think they believe that's too high a deficit. What I am still waiting to hear from them is how they would address the problem of that \$16-billion to \$17-billion deficit.

1740

I know what this motion says. This motion says, first of all, that we can't raise any taxes, but also that we should get our fiscal house in order. Now listen to this. We should get our fiscal house in order "through genuine reorganization and restructuring and elimination of waste in order to get the deficit under control." Do you really think that package in itself—that's it—is going to get the fiscal house in order? That is a complete copout on the part of the official opposition.

If you see your role as simply to criticize, that's fair comment. You are Her Majesty's loyal opposition and if you decide that's your role, simply to criticize government, that's fine. I think that's a legitimate role for you to play. But what is not acceptable is for you to stand in your place and say that your role is not simply to criticize, that it's to bring forth viable alternatives, and you don't do it. That's what's not acceptable.

You cannot continue to call for fiscal restraint one day, call for no tax increases the next day, call for more spending the next day, say that you're going to be a leader with a difference and bring forth alternatives, and then bring forth no alternatives except ones that would have no meaningful impact on the deficit whatsoever. I think that's what people in this province will find unacceptable.

I am not saying that this government has got all the answers or found all the solutions to our deficit or our fiscal problems, but what I will say to you is that at least we are tackling them in a forthright manner. We are tackling them in a very serious way. We're not trying to mislead anybody. We've opened the books of the province the way they've never been opened before. We're sitting down with the public sector, management and workers, and saying to them: "These are the books. Let's sit down and see where we can find the \$2 billion." To me that's an open and democratic way to address our problems.

We've already taken the \$4 billion in expenditure reductions. Those are not pleasant reductions. I was in the riding of Timiskaming last week and got a very strong reception from the people in New Liskeard, but I think the people of New Liskeard understand—the member for Timiskaming I think has played a positive role in this regard—that while we've got a major problem out there, we've got to address it, and they agree that we should reduce our expenditures. What they disagree with are the components of the package to reduce expenditures, but nobody is telling me we do not have to address the problem.

While everybody will have their own view of which expenditures should be reduced—I know sometimes, when it's a bit close to home, it's hard to accept that this particular reduction should take effect—I can tell you, Mr Speaker, that there were no easy choices in that list of expenditure reductions. The cabinet agonized over every single reduction. You could make a good argument why each one of those reductions should not take place, but you'll end up with a hollow package. You'll end up with no reductions. There are no easy choices if you're going to reduce expenditures.

It's time that the official opposition understood that the salad days of the 1980s are over, and that when they governed, those were indeed salad days. They could afford to layer program on program on program and not worry about the deficit, and increased the deficit by 33% in five short years.

We are working hard to protect services, to protect jobs at the community level. We will continue to do that and we look forward to some alternatives from the leader of the official opposition.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate, the honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I regret that it is now a quarter to 6, because I have been sitting here waiting with so much impatience as the Treasurer repeatedly calls on me in this place, one week before his budget, to provide him with the help that he so desperately needs to bring in the kind of budget that this province is looking for. I am anxious to provide him with the alternatives. In fact, I'm sitting here; I just counted them while the Treasurer was asking me to come forward with alternatives. I've got at least 18 alternatives outlined in my speech that I'm probably not going to get a chance to present, now that it's a quarter to 6 of the hour.

I would invite the Treasurer, if I cannot present all the alternatives today, to read the material that we keep presenting. I invite him to come to Thunder Bay, where I'm going to outline more alternatives, more vision for the future, the direction we believe this province should go. I'll be back on Monday and I'll be presenting our alternatives again, because we would truly like to see this government present the kind of budget this province needs.

We want to present alternatives. We are ready to present alternatives, but we want the alternatives presented in the context of a vision of hope and optimism for the future of this province, the kind of a vision that will both get the deficit under control, but will get people in this province back to work and will provide them with some stability and some hope for growth in the future. I'm more than ready to do that. I only wish there was sufficient time left, after the Treasurer has kept asking me for alternatives, to be able to do it all in my

few moments today.

As I came in, the Treasurer was acknowledging that our motion begins with the recognition that the NDP government for the past two and a half years has mis-managed the financial affairs of this province and has completely failed to provide a plan to get our economy going and get people back to work again. People are still waiting for that, and that description is understating the reality of what has happened in this province for the last two years.

The Treasurer has just finished saying that no government has spent more. He meant on training. I think we could extend that to almost every other area and add that no government has spent it less effectively, and that is another of our concerns.

I would like to remind the Treasurer of a basic reality, and that's the reality that this government has managed to take the deficit from zero, which was the deficit figure at budget year-end 1989-90. There is no doubting the accuracy of that statement. That is a statement confirmed by the Provincial Auditor, the Treasurer will note: year-end 1989-90, a budget deficit of zero.

I can tell the Treasurer, this Treasurer may never have this experience—I know he will never have this experience—but I would just share with him that when you can bring a balanced budget, you don't need a short-term, crisis, reactive, panic response to the kind of deficit that you've allowed to run up in this province over the last two and a half years.

I say that he has taken the budget deficit from zero in 1989-90 to what he now says is \$17 billion. I won't quarrel with him. We don't believe it's \$17 billion. We don't think he's done quite that badly. We think it's more like \$14 billion. Nevertheless, I won't pick that quarrel with the Treasurer today.

But they've done that in three short years. They have allowed that deficit to grow to be five times larger than it has ever been in the history of this province. That deficit is five times larger than it was when the Tory government left office, five times larger than the \$2.6 billion deficit that the Tories left. I recall very well that it took us four years to get the Tory deficit of \$2.6 billion down to zero, and I still wonder how long it's going to take us to get the NDP deficit back down to zero again.

It seems to me that the leader of the third party had an answer to that question last week. The leader of the third party said that he would be able to get the NDP deficit, whatever it ends up being, down to zero in three years.

I would say to the leader of the third party, were he here, show us the plan to do that, and I would say to the people of Ontario when they hear the leader of the third party say that: "Look at the Tory record, 15 straight years of a deficit under the Tory leadership in the province of Ontario and a \$450-billion debt from a

Conservative government in Ottawa. There is the Tory record on fiscal responsibility."

But I think the Treasurer is listening to the leader of the third party, because I heard the Treasurer speak about the record of Liberal spending and that is a line which the Tory leader tends to use rather frequently.

1750

So let me put some more statistics on the table, factual statistical information, to make the record clear that the record of Liberal spending in the five years of a Liberal government was an average of 9.6%. I contrast that with the Tory spending record over the last five years of a Tory government, which was 11.9%. I ask, who are the big spenders in this province?

Mr Stockwell: It was inflation.

Mr Turnbull: Inflation adjusted; you were a lot higher than we were.

Mrs McLeod: But let me come back to the matter of the government responsible for the government of Ontario right now, the government that so proudly said that it was going to fight the recession and not the deficit. That is one promise this government kept, because it certainly didn't fight the deficit. But I would also ask: How successful were they in fighting the recession?

The Treasurer has just said that economic growth, getting people back to work, has always been the highest priority of this government; that's why it undertook to fight the recession and let our deficit grow to the point where we have to have such chaotic reductions in our spending right now. They fought the deficit with 575,000 people out of work and record bankruptcies and record unemployment and youth unemployment at 19%. I ask you, how successful was their fight against the recession?

We agree that the deficit must come down. We cannot live with a deficit that is going to leave the next government, even if the Treasurer fulfils his most optimistic projections, with a legacy of \$86 billion in debt. We cannot live with a debt that is going to take \$1 billion more just to pay the interest every year and we can't live with a debt that means that by the time the next government takes office we will be spending more on interest to service the debt than we spend to educate our children. We can't live with that kind of legacy, so we will support the need for restraint and we will offer the alternatives and the vision of hope for the future that this Treasurer has not been able to find.

But I am still going to keep asking, and without apology: Where was Bob Rae; where was Floyd Laughren a year ago when we said that budget was smoke and mirrors? This government was refusing to acknowledge how serious the financial situation of this province was even a year ago, and therefore refused to deal with it and created the chaos we're experiencing

today. And I would ask: Where was Bob Rae and where was Floyd Laughren two years ago when they brought in that first budget and where they raised civil service salaries by 14%? And I ask the Treasurer: Surely, Treasurer, this isn't the kind of Keynesian economics that you used to teach.

Surely, Treasurer, both you and the Premier understood even then that you couldn't fight the recession by increasing your operating spending. It just doesn't work that way, Treasurer, and if you had controlled that spending two years ago when you knew we had no money to pay the debts because we were in a recession—that's why we had no revenues to pay the debts you were running up, Treasurer—then we would not be facing the need for drastic cuts in spending now.

Now we watch you, with concern and despair, desperately trying to recover what you so freely gave away two years ago, desperately offering crisis solutions to a crisis this government created. Let there be no mistake about that. This government created the crisis we are facing in the province today.

But my great concern is that they continue to say that their strategy is right on track. The Premier says, "We are right on track because we fought the recession when the economy was bad, and now the economy's recovering and we're ready to fight the deficit." But I just don't know where the signs are that the economy's recovering.

We saw 13,000 fewer jobs in the province of Ontario in April than in March. There were 24,000 more people looking for work. Our youth unemployment is still at record highs. That was before the college and university students were even at home looking for the jobs that aren't there.

No one feels that the economy's recovering. The plants are still closing. The businesses are still going bankrupt. People are still moving their businesses to the United States. Where is this recovery track that the Premier says he's on? We can't find that particular track.

Hon Mr Laughren: Where are the alternatives? We are waiting.

Mrs McLeod: The Treasurer's telling me that we don't have the alternatives. Because we are limited in the amount of time we have left in this session, I'm going to deal with one alternative only, and that's the fact that our questions today are serious questions. They're not questions here solely for the purpose of debate.

We have a very real concern that while this government now seems to have understood how desperate our financial situation is, it still has not understood that in addition to getting spending under control, in addition to making the expenditure reductions—and we understand the necessity of that; we have some other proposals for where he could cut more waste, more money, more programs that are not operating effectively—there is

another part to deficit reduction, a critical part, and that is to provide the basis for this economy to get going again, for people to get back to work.

Treasurer, that's how you begin to really get hold of the deficit: when we can get people off social assistance, off unemployment, back into the workforce because there are jobs for them to go to. And when people can go to those jobs, when people can be in the workforce, not only do we reduce our costs but your treasury will feel the benefit of the increased revenues from economic growth.

What you do not understand, Treasurer, what your government does not understand is that the reason we are not on a recovery track, as the Premier would like to believe, is because of the misguided policies of your government. Until we can make you understand that, we are not going to be able to make you understand the kind of alternatives that the people of this province need and that we keep urging you to adopt.

Treasurer, we need to have your government understand what you are doing to make the economy worse and what you could do to make the economy better. We will tell you over and over again: Change your labour legislation, get back to a balance between labour and management, change your constant use of regulations, and bring in a budget, Treasurer, with no new taxes, because that is the clearest economic signal that you could send to business in this province.

Treasurer, I am not saying, "Read my lips." The people of Ontario do not want to read your lips; they want to read your budget. Bring them in a budget with no new taxes. Give them a signal that you care about business in this province, that you want to open the province for business, that you want people to have jobs so they can get back to work and that this is your real priority and your major way of dealing with the deficit.

I understand that the time is up. I believe our alternatives make sense. We will urge the government to hear them and to act on them, and it is for that reason that we moved this motion today.

The Acting Speaker: Ms McLeod has moved opposition day motion number 2. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members; five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1758 to 1803.

The Acting Speaker: Mrs McLeod has moved opposition day motion number 2. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time.

Ayes

Arnott, Brown, Callahan, Caplan, Chiarelli, Conway, Cordiano, Curling, Daigeler, Eddy, Elston, Fawcett,

Grandmaître, Harnick, Henderson, Kwinter, Mahoney, McGuinty, McLeod, Miclash, Morin, Murphy, O'Neil (Quinte), O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau), Offer, Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt), Poirier, Poole, Ramsay, Runciman, Ruprecht, Sterling, Stockwell, Tilson, Turnbull, Villeneuve.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time.

Nays

Abel, Akande, Boyd, Buchanan, Carter, Charlton, Christopherson, Churley, Cooke, Cooper, Dadamo, Duignan, Farnan, Fletcher, Frankford, Gigantes, Grier, Haeck, Hampton, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Hope, Hugst, Jamison, Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings), Klopp, Kormos, Lankin, Laughren, Lessard, Malkowski, Mammoliti, Marchese, Martel, Martin, Mathysen, Mills, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Philip (Etobicoke-Rexdale), Pilkey, Rae, Rizzo, Silipo, Sutherland, Swarbrick, Ward, Waters, Wessinger, White, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Winninger, Wiseman, Wood, Ziemba.

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 36, the nays 61.

The Acting Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Mr Speaker, on a point of order: Since this is the most cabinet ministers we've seen in this place for a week and since the Premier is here, can we have unanimous consent to have question period?

The Acting Speaker: That is not a point of order. Is there unanimous consent? No.

Pursuant to standing order 34, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made. The member for York Mills has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer—

Mr Elston: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Business of the week must come first.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable House leader.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Pursuant to standing order 55, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, May 17, we will give second reading consideration to the Ryerson Polytechnic University Statute Law Amendment Act, Bill 1, followed by second reading consideration of Bill 38, the Retail Business Holidays Act.

On Tuesday, May 18, we will give third reading consideration to the Ryerson Polytechnic University Statute Law Amendment Act, Bill 1. Following that, we shall resume second reading consideration of Bill 38, the Retail Business Holidays Act.

On Wednesday, May 19, at 4 pm, the Minister of Finance will present the 1993 budget.

In the morning of Thursday, May 20, during the time reserved for private members' public business, we will consider ballot item number 9, a resolution standing in the name of Mrs Witmer, and ballot item number 10, a resolution standing in the name of Mr Farnan.

Thursday afternoon will be reserved for the opposition parties to respond to the budget address.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Pursuant to standing order 34, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.
1810

DRIVERS' LICENCES

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): The member for York Mills has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given yesterday by the Minister of Transportation. The member has five minutes to debate the matter and the minister or parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes. I call on the honourable member for York Mills.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Yesterday, I was dissatisfied with the Minister of Transportation's reply to a question that I asked.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): And rightly so.

Mr Turnbull: As my colleague the member for Etobicoke West points out, rightly so. For about two years, I have been pushing for the implementation of graduated licences. I called for a section 125 study of this potential legislation and I was constantly put off by the government with suggestions that legislation was impending. Had I known the tactics of the government, I would not have been put off; I would have pushed forward with my 125.

The fact is that over 1,000 people a year are killed on the roads of Ontario. It's absolutely critical that we bring forward legislation immediately, before the summer season, before we have these deaths. We know that to a tremendous extent, younger drivers, inexperienced drivers, are responsible for the carnage on the roads. Surely, with all-party support, it would be easy to get first, second and third reading of this legislation before we rise for the summer.

The fact is that last year we saw, within a matter of days, an opposition member bring forward a private member's bill which sought to protect minors from buying lottery tickets, and within days, this Legislature was able to get this through.

With that kind of attitude, there's no reason that we couldn't turn to this important legislation. I suppose the minister's weak comments would suggest that this is terribly complicated legislation and it requires a lot of time to prepare it. That is absolutely incorrect. There is legislation in Newfoundland at the moment. With a little time being spent with the minister and the two opposition critics, I'm confident that in an afternoon we could put together, essentially, the outline of a bill and we could have it drafted by legislative counsel within a matter of days to bring before this Legislature. I'm absolutely confident there would be no delay if this government would bring the legislation forward to first, second and third reading.

As things stand, the government wants to bring in legislation in the fall after having studied it in committee during the summer recess. It isn't reasonable to go out for consultation without the legislation, given the fact that there is such broad consensus among the public, as evidenced by the literally thousands of names of people who have signed petitions that have been presented on all sides of this Legislature urging the government to introduce graduated licences, the cooperation of the Insurance Bureau of Canada and, in addition, the results of the CTV poll which occurred some week and a half ago, in which the overwhelming number of some 38,000 respondents suggested that they would be in favour of much tougher legislation along the lines of graduated licence legislation as proposed.

The proposal by the government is relatively timid and doesn't in my estimation go as far as it should, but at least we could put that timid legislation in place now, and then after the fact go and review it in a few months and find out what the experience is, and in the meantime, we would have saved valuable lives.

In view of the fact that the minister is not in the House, does not find it fitting to spend time responding to my questions, I won't go on any longer. I'm disappointed that the government will not lend itself to an all-party approach of getting this important legislation through to save lives. I know I'm not going to get any response, so with that, I will sit down.

The Acting Speaker: A motion for adjournment has been deemed to have been passed. We will meet next Monday at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1815.

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No. 20



N° 20

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 17 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 17 mai 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

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Renseignements sur l'Index

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Monday 17 May 1993

The House met at 1332.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): Undeniably, unemployment is a problem across the province. Just as secure employment is a challenge for permanent workers, opportunities are as scarce for summer students. I am pleased to report, however, that the community I represent recently pulled together for a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Canada Employment Centre for Students.

Area businesses not only encouraged the hiring of summer students but also contributed to the 25th anniversary celebrations. They include: Wilma's Kitchen, Herb's Deli, Mister C's, Maynards Independent Grocer, Mexicali Rosa, Pepsi-Cola Bottling, Coca-Cola, Rosemarie McAlear, and Jim and Pat Brunt.

I know that the supervisor, Carolyn Sayyeau, and the entire Canada Employment Centre for Students will be working hard throughout the summer to find as many jobs as possible for the students.

Together we can invest in our future by giving our youth the hope, jobs and education they need.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): Recently, the Lanark County Mutual Aid Association provided a ceremony acknowledging the efforts of firefighters in Lanark county. The fire marshal of Ontario and the regional manager were present to recognize 12 retiring firefighters with service amounting to 355 man-years.

At the same time, 18 new volunteer firefighters were accredited for having completed the 100-hour volunteer course. This course, offered for the first time in Smiths Falls, provided 1,800 man-hours of training for volunteers who will use these skills for the benefit of all and to help train their colleagues.

I would like to recognize the tremendous contribution volunteers make in Lanark county. The average county in Ontario depends upon volunteer firefighters for 72% of their firefighting services. In Lanark county, 96% of our firefighters are volunteers. Out of the 13 fire departments in Lanark county, 11 are entirely dependent upon the contributions of volunteers.

Each of these individuals should be duly recognized for their dedication to the community. It is this spirit of volunteerism that binds the community together. Lanark county's new volunteer firefighters warrant special consideration, for in their service to the community they often face many dangers as they try to save the lives of others.

JEAN LITTLE

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): Today I'd like to join the people of Guelph in congratulating children's author Jean Little. Jean is a long-time Guelph resident who was recently admitted to the Order of Canada.

In her 30 years of writing, Jean has published 20 books and has six more in progress. She has won several literary awards. Her popular novel *Mama's Going to Buy You a Mockingbird* was adapted for television.

In Guelph, Jean has personally brought hours of listening pleasure to many children, visiting libraries and schools with her guide dog, Ritz.

Jean is a strong defender of meaningful literature for all children. In the 1960s when Jean was working with children with cerebral palsy, she saw a need for stories that dealt in a realistic way with the issues facing physically challenged children. Five of her books feature children with special needs.

Jean has modestly said that this award is a recognition of the new-found status of Canadian children's literature, but those who know her work credit her with being one of the pioneers in this field. Her first books were published in the 1960s when there were no Canadian children's book editors or publishers.

Along with everyone in this Legislature, I'd like to congratulate Jean Little.

LEGISLATIVE AWARDS

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): Mr Speaker, I am sure you, like many others throughout our province, have been watching the hockey playoffs.

Debates rage as to who will be the award recipients for the past season and for these playoffs. Although we in this Legislature continue to debate the issues of the day, we cannot help but gaze skyward, wondering who is going to win the Ontario Legislature awards.

I am in receipt of a confidential memo which identifies the award recipients and I feel duty-bound, as a member of the Legislature, to make publicly known information heretofore only privately held.

The Don Cherry award for understatement in the face of fact goes to the Minister of Finance, Floyd Laughren, for his predictions on the 1992 Ontario deficit.

The Don Cherry award for overstatement in the face of fact goes to the Minister of Finance, Floyd Laughren, for his prediction on the 1993 Ontario deficit.

The Don Cherry award for straight fact goes to—no one in the Ontario government qualified.

The Chicago Black Hawks award, which recognizes the group effort in placing first and then being knocked out in the first round, goes to the NDP caucus.

Finally, the John Ziegler award, the award which recognizes the non-attendance of an individual holding the highest office in an organization, goes to the Premier, Bob Rae, in recognition of his many days of absence in this Legislature.

Congratulations to all.

CHILD SAFETY

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): The second annual Green Ribbon of Hope Campaign commemorating National Missing Children's Day will be May 25.

Green is the symbol of the Child Find organization and is the colour of hope. It epitomizes their quest for the safe return of all missing children.

Child Find Ontario is a member of Child Find Canada, a registered non-profit charitable organization established in 1983 to educate the public, and particularly children and their guardians, on the topic of abduction prevention and to assist in the search process for missing children.

Each year in Canada, police receive reports on thousands of missing children who are classified as runaways or the victims of parental or stranger abductions. The Green Ribbon campaign is designed to draw the public's attention to the issue of missing children in Canada.

The loss of a child affects not just the family and friends but the entire community. A missing child is everyone's responsibility.

1340

CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): Mr Speaker, you'll remember that last Wednesday evening a group of members of this Legislature and representatives of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind met in the legislative dining room in order to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Better known, I guess, as the CNIB, it was founded by Lieutenant Colonel Edwin A. Baker, and he lived from 1893-1968. What I didn't know until I went to that meeting was that Lieutenant Colonel Baker was born in my constituency. He was born at Parrotts Bay in Ernestown township just west of Kingston.

It was very interesting to me to find out about him and to know that he had been wounded in the First World War and because of damage to his eyes could no longer see. He along with six other individuals founded the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

I want to say too that Mr Baker was an outstanding individual and that all those people who represent the CNIB certainly deserve a great round of applause and certainly a great recognition for what they've done. But as an aside, I'd like you to know too that he had a son named Phil Baker who is presently a judge in Kingston,

and a little bit of trivia that not many people know is that Rob Baker is a member of the group from Kingston that is becoming quite well known, known as The Tragically Hip.

ROOMING HOUSES

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): On December 23, 1989, 10 people died in the Rupert Hotel fire, one of the worst blazes in Toronto's history. Tomorrow in my riding at 11 am a plaque will be unveiled at the corner of Queen and Parliament streets to commemorate the victims of this disaster. In attendance will be Bob Keele from the Rupert House Coalition, Dale Parsad and other former residents.

As you know, the Rupert House Coalition brought together 35 legal, church and service groups. The ceremony will also be attended by tenants of many neighbouring rooming houses.

It has been nearly a year since the government released the Lightman report on unregulated rooming houses. Let us not forget that nearly 50,000 people in this province use these facilities for housing, which is a substantial number of people and represents a community the size of Barrie, my home town.

The residents of these facilities are relying on this government for reforms in this area, and people in my riding are concerned about rumours that the Minister of Housing in her submissions to cabinet is diluting those recommendations. I would call on the minister, since the minister is scheduled to be in attendance at tomorrow's unveiling, to do the right thing and announce the changes that the government will be making to better the lot of the residents in rooming and lodging houses.

FRUIT GROWERS

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): As the Minister of Agriculture and Food will know, most apple growers have been paying into a tripartite insurance plan for the past 10 years along with federal and provincial governments. Because of national averaging, there have been no payouts in Ontario for the last four years even though our producers have suffered from low prices, drought and frost injury to their crops.

The returns in 1991 were certainly low enough to trigger a payment. In 1992, returns are estimated to be 30% less than those in 1991 because of miserable weather which produced fruit with a reduced sugar content and record low prices.

This province's apple growers are suffering badly. Many have had to borrow simply to pay into an insurance scheme which offers no support. Because they have not received as much from this plan in the past as producers in other provinces, they feel there should be a surplus in Ontario's portion, and they would like to receive it. They maintain that a national tripartite scheme has hurt them. They feel that a regional scheme would be of far more benefit and would not drain Ontario's budget.

Our apple industry has a proud tradition and an excellent reputation. In my view, it deserves to survive, but it will die if we do not do something immediately to assist it. The apple growers are asking for nothing more than fairness. I urge the minister to listen to their request and to move quickly to establish a regional plan to help those struggling farmers.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr Randy R. Hope (Chatham-Kent): On the weekend, I had the opportunity to renew some old thoughts and old feelings that were there, and one of the old thoughts and old feelings was around free trade. About six busloads of Chathamites and Kent countyites joined the buses, everyone from the small business community to farmers to auto sector workers and workers of all sectors, as we entered the buses and travelled our way to Ottawa in a deal that was called the North American free trade agreement, which we were protesting.

One thing about my community is that it has understood what the free trade agreement has done to it and what NAFTA will do to it in the future economic policies of the Tory government. As we entered the buses and took our trip down the 401, we were met by a number of colleagues throughout Canada, everywhere from Vancouver to Newfoundland and all around Ontario. Almost 100,000 people joined the front in Ottawa to protest NAFTA. We were joined by a number of our colleagues. I know the Minister of Housing was there, as we met on the streets. It was a pleasure.

It brought back a lot of memories, memories of what we told people the effects of free trade would be and how devastating it would be to our communities. But one thing we did notice, as I looked around the front lines, is that there were more and more people. More and more people have understood the effects of free trade and will understand the effects of NAFTA.

One of the important parts was that my international colleagues were there, because one thing the northern United States is doing is using Ontario as an example of what NAFTA will do to its communities. It's important for us to kill the Tory policies and to kill NAFTA.

CORRECTION

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In the statement that I just gave recently, I erroneously said that it was the 100th anniversary of the CNIB. Indeed, it's the 75th anniversary of the CNIB, the 100th anniversary of the birth of Lieutenant Colonel Baker.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

FLUOROCARBONS

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): On Earth Day, April 22, we heard that the ozone levels over the northern hemisphere were at their lowest in 14 years. In the upper atmosphere, ozone acts

as a shield that protects all forms of life on earth from the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation.

Even today, as a matter of interest, the ozone level in Toronto is 6.9 on an overcast, rainy day like this. Most people will know that 7.5 is considered dangerous.

But because of the release of synthetic chemicals, commonly known as fluorocarbons, the ozone layer is shrinking. Ontario is taking the lead in Canada to reduce ozone-depleting substances. Today I'm introducing a draft regulation to prevent the release of fluorocarbon refrigerants. These include chlorofluorocarbons, hydrochlorofluorocarbons and hydrofluorocarbons, used in refrigerators, freezers and air-conditioning systems.

Under this regulation, venting of refrigerant CFCs, HCFCs and HFCs will be prohibited. As of January 1, 1994, only certified persons will be allowed to handle, service and repair refrigeration equipment containing fluorocarbon refrigerants. All equipment to be dismantled, destroyed or disposed of will have to be drained of CFCs and tagged accordingly. As of December 31, 1995, new model cars will no longer be fitted with air-conditioning units that contain CFCs and HCFCs.

This regulation is the most comprehensive for refrigerants in Canada. It was developed following consultation with industry, labour and environmental groups. Ontario is the only province regulating CFCs together with HCFCs and HFCs.

In the coming 30 days, we invite public comments on the draft regulation. We're working with potential partners to provide an ozone depletion awareness training and certification program for people who service equipment that contains fluorocarbon refrigerants.

While the fridge in your kitchen or mine may not release a huge amount of CFCs, the cumulative effect of millions of fridges, not to mention the millions of home and car air-conditioning systems, has an enormous destructive potential to the ozone layer.

We all must bear the responsibility to properly maintain this equipment and to ensure that fluorocarbon refrigerants are not released. The small cost to consumers will bring a tremendous savings to human health and to the planet.

Protecting the environment can bring in economic benefits as well. With Ontario's technological knowhow, we are in a position to develop innovative processes that will not only deal with CFCs but also create jobs and stimulate the growth of our green industries.

These industries are the province's fastest-growing economic sector. Helping to build and maintain Ontario's leadership in this field is part of the government's 10-point plan to put Ontario back to work. I look forward to continued cooperative efforts as we work together to address one of the most serious environmental issues we face: the depletion of the ozone layer.

1350

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): In response to the statement, I want to begin by indicating to the Legislature that in October of last year, the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment issued a report outlining the national action plan for recovery, recycling and reclamation of ozone-depleting substances such as CFCs. The plan committed provincial governments to acting on CFC recycling and recovery initiatives by the end of 1992. Here we are in 1993, with nothing announced today except further consultation. I think many would say that the announcement today could be characterized as too little and too late.

It is interesting to note that a press release was issued by the internationally renowned group Friends of the Earth which grades the effort of the Ontario government in addressing this important environmental issue. I think we should take a moment to take a look at where our province stands with respect to this group. Are we ranking high or in the middle?

I happen to have a copy of that report. An A-minus was given to Manitoba, a B-plus to British Columbia, a B to Saskatchewan, a B-minus to Nova Scotia—this is not being done alphabetically—a C-plus to New Brunswick and a D to Ontario. The province of Ontario ranked lowest of any province in this country with legislation.

The report notes that Ontario has not acted upon the conditions of the national action plan. It notes that the regulations that do exist are inadequate, incomplete, and have failed to be enforced. This record is even more deplorable considering that the province of Ontario releases the majority of Canadian ozone-depleting substances, accounting for approximately 60% of the national total.

The government promised to implement an immediate ban on CFCs in flexible furniture foam and rigid foam insulation, with a complete ban by 1995 of all ozone-destroying CFCs, methylchloroform, halons and carbon tetrachloride. This announcement today contains no announcement, no action on your promise.

I believe the minister should have stood in his place today and indicate to the Legislature whether—strange as it may be—they have changed their position on promises previously made. Are they going to be implemented? If so, when and how?

With respect to the halon issue, you claim in your press release today that with this action, 90% of the sources of ozone-depleting substances will be controlled. I disagree with that percentage. The release of halons, which are used in fire extinguishers, among other places, accounts for up to 40% of the total source of ozone-depleting substances in the province. The regulation, the consultation around regulation, the discussion around consultation dealing with regulation, that has been announced today does not address the use and release of this environmentally dangerous substance.

Ozone depletion is a serious environmental problem for Ontarians. This announcement of further consultation is wanting in the extreme. But if this government is slow off the mark in this area, then what about ground-level ozone?

I have a press release from Pollution Probe, and the date is today. It states that Ontarians experience the worst summer smog problems in the country and everyone is asking the Minister of Environment to clear the air. Ground-level ozone is the principal component in urban smog. It is also the pollutant which most frequently exceeds Health and Welfare Canada's acceptable levels at Ontario air-monitoring stations. A survey of Ontario hospital records has shown increased admissions for respiratory problems on days with polluted air. People are pointing out that British Columbia is actively fighting smog. Ontario is still without targets, time lines or an action plan for clearing the air.

In the absence of real control actions, the government's smog alert program will merely tell Ontarians when they should hold their breath: "Don't inhale." People are asking the Ontario government to commit to clear time lines, put some teeth into policy, tighten regulations, establish new programs, hold talks on initiatives to prevent the forming of smog.

Minister, get on with the job full-time of protecting our environment.

The Speaker: The member's time has expired. Responses, third party.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I'd like to comment on the Minister of the Environment's announcement today.

I think all of us congratulate the minister in taking the actions he has. I think we've been waiting for it for some time. There's been more and more concern about skin cancer and the danger from the sun, and every day we hear of the fear for the ozone layer.

To be critical, obviously we have to refer to the little chart that the Liberal critic read to you. It is a little late. Manitoba presented legislation back in 1992; British Columbia, if only in February of this year; Saskatchewan, January 1991; Nova Scotia, February 1991; New Brunswick, September 1992. So it is a little late bringing this forward, particularly with the serious concerns we have. For the first time, this year there are going to be gauges telling us about the dangers of being out in the sun too long for our children, which you mentioned in your press conference this morning. So this is something that's been coming up and up. Why have you taken this long to do that?

There are other issues you haven't dealt with: the issue of acid rain. That is another topic that has been going on for a great number of years, and you've failed to deal with that.

One of the concerns I have is that this government

has spent all of its time on the landfill issue. It isn't looking at other issues. Although Bill 8 was introduced several weeks ago, although it didn't give all of the answers, it did introduce recycling issues.

The other subject, of course, has to do with the landfill sites. We're concerned about our water in this province, and the government continues with its policies destroying the water in this province, destroying the agricultural lands in this province, by putting super-dumps on these areas.

I will be very brief in simply saying that I congratulate the minister in putting forward this paper at this time. It's a little late, and I think he's going to have to spend a little bit more time making it quite clear as to how it's going to be paid for. Certainly it's something that needs to be done, but the cost of it is going to be high. Once again, this province isn't going to pay for it; you're going to put it on the backs of private enterprise. I think that's something your government's going to have to have a long look at.

I encourage you to do more. I encourage you to do more in saving the water of this province. I encourage you to do more in solving the acid rain of this province.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): Why has it taken so long? Does it take a crisis, to reach the state that it has now in the province of Ontario, to finally have the Ministry of Environment and Energy wake up and realize that it may almost be too late now? There isn't a parent who isn't concerned about the welfare of his or her children, or should we stop and think about the consequences of going outside and being exposed to the sun's rays without the ozone layer to protect us.

Here you are now, pontificating as if you're finally doing it all. It's only the beginning. You haven't done anything about the acid rain abatement. You haven't even looked at the air, you're so busy working with the IWA and landfill and wrecking York, Durham and Peel. You haven't done a thing for us yet.

So talk is cheap. Let's come along a year from now and see what you've done. It's probably not very much. You're good at the talk, Minister, but you're not good at the action. We're sick of talk, talk, talk. Make it happen.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): It leads one to think that what this government and this minister spoke of in opposition was either simply hot air or they weren't really interested in what they were saying. The suggestion in opposition was that these problems could be solved very simply, very quickly, with legislation introduced in this House by previous administrations.

It's astounding that it's taken nearly three years, a few months short of three years, to bring this kind of announcement to this House. It shows that, ideally, this government either couldn't implement what it said was so simple in opposition, or it simply wasn't interested.

1400

I would say too that this ministry has been so bogged down in this internal project to find a landfill site in the Metropolitan Toronto area that practically all important issues on the environment have been put on the back burner.

Hon Mr Wildman: Oh, don't be silly.

Mr Stockwell: They're saying, "Don't be silly," but it's three years, Mr Minister. You know, you sat there barking at every critic who stood up and commented on this announcement; three years for something you suggested was so simple and legislation could've been written, when you were in opposition. Clearly, either you're not committed or what you were saying on this side of the House simply wasn't doable. My prediction is, what you said on this side of the House wasn't doable and you're learning every day when you're the government that it's not quite as simple as you suggested it was.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): We will all remember that when this government was elected to office, it promised a new spirit of partnership with the municipalities. The municipalities are now learning that the partnership has been thrown out the window and replaced with an atmosphere of chaos management and complete distrust.

When the government first announced its expenditure control plan, it sort of led municipalities to believe that the cuts would only be in the range of about 2%. We knew, of course, and said so, that the cuts to unconditional grants were actually more in the order of 11%. Last week the government confirmed the municipalities' fears. It admitted that the cuts could be up to 12.9% of unconditional transfers for many municipalities.

But in announcing this double-digit reduction, the government also promised that smaller municipalities in rural and northern Ontario would be protected. We can't understand why, if this was the plan, a small rural municipality like Wallace township, for example, with a population of less than 3,000 residents, is facing a full 12.9% reduction in its grants.

I would ask the Premier, why would your government say that it promises to protect small municipalities if that's not what's happening? Is this in fact not just one more example of the complete lack of planning and the complete chaos that your government's last-minute expenditure control plans have created, and, I ask, how you can expect municipalities across this province to continue to cope with this kind of chaos management?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I would say, with respect, to the honourable member that I'm sure she can bring forward whatever examples she chooses. I would simply say to her that there is a cap on the impact of the

reductions. It's a 3% cap as a percentage of municipal operating revenues.

The formula that has been put forward by the ministry is intended to deal as fairly as possible with a circumstance in which it is simply quite necessary for this province to include our social partners in the realities of the day. For a period of time now, we've been transferring subsidies to the municipalities, and the province was borrowing in order to effect those transfers.

I would say to the honourable member, if she thinks it is sound, fair or reasonable for us as a province to continue to borrow to transfer subsidies to municipalities and to others that are simply going to have to be paid for by future generations, I think that's pretty unsound. We're carrying forward on a basis that we think is fair and reasonable, and there is a cap in terms of the impact on any groups affected.

Mrs McLeod: It seems to me that the Premier had a rather descriptive term for the federal government when it engaged in a similar kind of downloading. "Absconding debt" is the phrase that comes to the minds of most of my colleagues around.

The Premier will know well the caps on operating budgets of the municipalities don't stop the constant downloading of costs to the municipal level that this government is currently engaged in, and we can see no rhyme and no reason in the kinds of figures that the government has presented to us to manage that expenditure control plan. In fact we can't understand why the Premier has refused to meet with the municipalities to even discuss their concerns with them.

The Premier has talked over the last weeks about the importance of the disentanglement talks as an example of how the municipalities and the province can work together. He will know that last week the Association of Municipalities of Ontario turned down the disentanglement proposals because they say that this government's chaos management approach to offloading costs has eroded the principle of any supposed partnership.

The municipalities are concerned that the disentanglement process is going to be just one more step in the offloading of costs to the municipal level of government. The disentanglement talks failed, Premier, because of the atmosphere of distrust and chaos which your government has created, and I ask you now, what are your next steps?

Hon Mr Rae: The honourable member was a member of a government at a time when its revenues were increasing in double-digit numbers, double-digit increase in revenues to the cabinet of which she was a member, and it froze its transfers to the municipalities. We're dealing with a situation where, in real terms, our revenues have been falling in this province for the last three years and where we've made a very real decision to say to the municipalities, "We have to inject an

element of reality into the fiscal relationships that exist between us."

I am disappointed, obviously, by the decision of the AMO executive with respect to disentanglement. All I can say to them and say to the honourable member is, this government intends to proceed with social assistance reform; we intend to proceed with a fairer system as it relates to the taxpayers of the province. Of course, we'd much prefer to do it on a cooperative basis with the municipalities, but the reality of social assistance and reform and the need to make those reforms is very, very clear.

We must proceed on those reforms. The people and the taxpayers of the province are interested in that, and I think they're also interested in getting on with things and not simply pointing fingers from one level of government to another.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Orlino): Frame that quote.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): You haven't lost your sense of humour.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. Final supplementary.

Mrs McLeod: Mr Speaker, words are taken away when the Premier uses that particular rebuttal. I do want to suggest to the Premier, though, that in the past municipalities might have looked for at least clear and consistent budget statements and not constant changes in the middle of their year, when they've already levied the taxes, when they've already set their budgets, and that's why the municipalities are particularly concerned. They're concerned when what is an 11% cut is somehow presented as something that won't really affect their budgets, won't really affect their taxes.

I say to the Premier, the expenditure control plan is creating chaos, the disentanglement talks have broken down and you are still looking for \$2 billion in savings to be achieved in social contract talks that are going nowhere.

I take you back to these same municipalities, Premier. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario insists that it cannot and it will not take part in the social contract talks. The municipal association insists that, like other provincial employer and employee organizations, it simply cannot speak for the hundreds of municipalities in this province. The municipalities understand what your government seems to fail to learn, and that is that your attempt to negotiate over 9,000 individual collective agreements at one table has no hope of being successful.

Will you not listen to what the municipalities are so clearly telling you? Will you not take the responsible act of sitting down and negotiating with your own provincial employees and let the municipalities negotiate their own restraint measures with their own local unions?

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member, if she's now saying that she's encouraging the municipalities to stay away from the talks or she supports the municipalities in staying away from the talks, I'm very surprised that would now be the position of the Liberal Party. I would have thought that the position of the Liberal Party would be, better to have serious discussions and negotiations with all the partners at the table, all sharing the same information, than for her to be saying, "No, we support the municipalities."

I support the hospital association, which said last week that it felt the government's proposals were the beginning of a serious dialogue. That's exactly what we're trying to establish. I would say to the honourable member, obviously, we believe that it's important for us, in order to effect the kinds of savings that have to be effected this year, it's crucial for us to have the partners at the table.

I would have thought the municipal governments would benefit from that participation rather than from being absent. Obviously, it's a judgement for them to make, but I can't see that being away is in their interests. To me it makes less sense than the alternative.

1410

HEALTH CARE

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): My second question is to the Minister of Health. In the last few days the government has put before the talks a detailed set of expenditure control proposals affecting medicare and health and hospital services in the province. I have a copy of that document in my hand and I'm sure the minister, though she has not presented it to the House, is quite familiar with it.

My first question to the Minister of Health is concerning this expenditure control plan that targets medical and hospital services and expects to save over a quarter of a billion dollars this year. Among the proposals—and there are very many interesting proposals in this document, but let me start with one of the proposals—you plan, as a government, to propose the elimination of the right of medical residents to bill the Ontario health insurance plan. There is no question that should you achieve that end, this change potentially will have a very significant effect on rural and small hospitals right across the province.

Madam Minister, can you indicate to all of us who represent rural communities like I do in Renfrew, like the Minister of Transportation does in northwestern Ontario, what alternative you are going to be able to offer the residents of communities like Barry's Bay and Manitouwadge since you plan to eliminate the right of medical residents to directly bill the Ontario health insurance plan?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): The objectives of the expenditure reductions as well as the issues

that we're discussing with the Ontario Medical Association are to contain the costs and the rapid expansion of OHIP expenditures that have gone uncontrolled for many years as well as to provide a more equitable service throughout the province and in all regions of the province, particularly in the rural areas. We certainly look forward to discussing with the OMA ways in which that objective can finally be achieved.

Mr Conway: We all understand what the objective is, and the Minister of Finance tabled now almost a month ago a specific program that indicated that, on the payment to physicians this year, you plan to reduce that payment by \$275 million. I understand that.

You have now put before your partners a very specific; very interesting detailed set of proposals as to how you're going to achieve that this year. It's your plan. I am asking you on behalf of my rural constituents—they want to know—how you are going to, in rural communities, replace the right of medical residents to bill the plan, which replacement I understand.

If you're going to take that away, how are you going to provide an alternative that is going to maintain a level of good care in all of these small rural hospitals across eastern, central, western and particularly northern Ontario? We know what you want to do. How are you going to do it?

Hon Mrs Grier: We intend and we have very fortunately in this province a mechanism to discuss with the Ontario Medical Association, which represents the physicians of this province, how in fact we can best accomplish what we are totally committed to, which is a containment of the costs of OHIP billings. We are more than happy and in fact intend to discuss with the OMA the details of how those reductions will be accomplished.

Mr Conway: I just have to say, as a final supplementary, this is your proposal that is to fit into this budgetary policy. This is on the table. I would tell my honourable friends across the House, if you haven't seen this, you'll want to read it, because this is dealing with the integrity of medicare and this is going to—

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): Oh no, it isn't.

Mr Conway: I tell you, this is full of very interesting proposals, having to do with a whole range of very important health services. It's your plan; it's not my plan. You've put this on the table and you have said this mechanism is going to achieve a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of savings in this year, a fiscal year which began seven weeks ago.

I understand what your objectives are. I want to know, but more importantly, my rural constituents in places like Deep River and Barry's Bay served by community rural hospitals want to know how you're going to provide the alternatives to ensure that those

practitioners who are not going to be allowed to access the plan through traditional means—fee for service—can provide health and medical services to people who rightly expect them.

Hon Mrs Grier: The member is correct. There are a number of proposals that have been put forward by this ministry, proposals that we wish to discuss in their detail and in their implementation. What is clear is that we have to reduce the amount of money that is currently expended for OHIP and we have to contain the costs of our health care system. But what is not up for discussion is the commitment of this government to medicare, the commitment to protect and to preserve medicare and the commitment to access and equitable health care services in communities large and small around this province.

TAX INCREASES

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier. Premier, this morning's Toronto Star reports, "Rae says he has no option but to raise taxes to help reduce the deficit." Premier, you and I know that you have many other options, so I don't know why you continue to try to fool the public by saying that you have no option.

This past weekend, you and I were both in Thunder Bay. The message that the chamber of commerce gave was quite clear to all three leaders—we were all there in Thunder Bay this weekend—and that was that if you expect them, the private sector, to create even one new job this year, if you expect that, there must be no new taxes in this budget you're bringing in. That's what I've been telling you and the Liberals for the last four years. That's what economists and investors have been telling you ever since you won the election.

I would ask you this, Premier: Given that you hiked taxes in your first budget and you hiked taxes in your second budget, and both of those two budgets for job creation in the private sector were absolute disasters, and given as well, Premier, according to you, even after you hiked taxes in both budgets, you got less overall revenue—you said your revenues are going down—what is it that makes you think that in this budget, hiking taxes will either give you more money or will create one single job?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Let's just say that the member and I have a difference of opinion. I think to talk about Canada being able to deal with a \$600-billion problem without looking at revenues is, frankly, completely unrealistic.

I'm talking about Ontario as well. With respect to our own jurisdiction, I would say to him very clearly that the emphasis of the budget on Wednesday is going to be jobs. The thrust of what we've been doing has been jobs.

Let me say directly to the honourable member, the

honourable member talks about the impact of last year's budget on jobs. The fact of the matter is—the Treasurer will be able to show this very clearly in his budget on Wednesday—that there are more people working in Ontario today than there were at the time of the last budget. Employment has increased, job creation has increased, and this pattern is one which we want to encourage, having a realistic talking out of the same side of one mouth at the same time.

I'm not going to go into the business community and say, "Yes, we have a deficit problem, but there's no way that you're going to be able to contribute to it on the revenue side." I think that's unrealistic. I think it's equally unrealistic to go to public sector unions and say, "Yes, we have a deficit problem, but you're not going to have to make a contribution to deal with it."

The message from this government is quite consistent. In order to create jobs on the investment side, in order to encourage the creation of new jobs, we have to have a realistic approach to public finances.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: That requires a contribution from everyone in our society who has the ability to contribute, and that's the philosophy and the position of the New Democratic Party government of Ontario.

1420

Mr Harris: The Premier continues to say that that's his philosophy. The Liberals said the same thing. Hike taxes; that's their philosophy. You continue to say everybody must share the burden of deficit reduction. Premier, for the last eight years, Liberal and NDP governments have asked the taxpayers all by themselves 55 times to share deficit reduction to the tune of \$8 billion in new taxes. They're the only ones who were asked, for eight years in a row, 55 times. I say to you, and the business community, taxpayers, union members, everybody is saying to you, "It's now time for the government to play a little catch-up," because for those same eight years government kept spending and spending. In the last eight years it's been taxpayers all alone 55 times. Now what we're simply saying to you is, you've got eight years and 55 cuts of catch-up before you go back to the taxpayers for one more cent.

I would ask you, given that there are many other options, many alternatives, will you look to those alternatives of government spending instead of going back to the taxpayer for the ninth year in a row?

Hon Bob Rae: I'm obviously not in a position to discuss the budget on Wednesday, but I think if the honourable member is here on that day he will see very clearly, and I think the public will see very clearly, that this government is going to be doing more to deal with the question of expenditure and government spending than any government in the last half-century. That is, I

think, a fact which needs to be brought to his attention.

In addition to that, we are also going to the public sector and saying that there has to be some recognition of the extent of the problem, in terms of restructuring the public sector. We're saying as well that in order for us to have a realistic job creation/debt reduction strategy—and the two go together—there have to be increased taxes.

I'm not pretending this is the popular thing to do. Sure, it doesn't take a whole lot of guts to go into the chamber of commerce and say, "I promise you no new taxes ever." That's not exactly the charge of the light brigade. I'm saying that when I went to the chamber I said, "We are looking to a real reduction in the level and pace of debt increase in this province; we're looking at a serious attempt to deal with the public sector restructuring."

The Speaker: Would the Premier complete his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: We're also going to be asking the people out there for a contribution, by way of taxes, on the basis of their ability to do so, which is the foundation, I think, of any fair tax system.

I think this is a sound approach. I think it will lead to the strongest possibility for job creation for the future of this province. We can't do it on another basis.

Mr Harris: Premier, you and treasurers for the last eight years have tried to do it on the basis of 55 tax hikes, to the tune of \$8 billion. Each time you did that, you destroyed jobs.

We've outlined for you many options other than hiking taxes. In the Progressive Conservative minority report on the budget this year, for example, we gave you the option not to spend millions to drive the private sector out of day care. We gave you another option which the Canadian Federation of Independent Business gave to you as well. They say it will save you \$500 million each year for 30 years if you freeze the expansion of the failed government-owned housing programs started by the Liberals. You have an option to crack down on welfare fraud that the auditor told you of and on health care fraud that has been pointed out to you by the auditor and by our party for the past year.

Premier, even some of the options that we have given you will wipe out completely the need for any tax grab on Wednesday. I would ask you this by way of final supplementary: Given that 55 times you and the Liberals went to the taxpayers over the last eight years, why will you not consider some of the proposals that are given to you by our party, by the CFIB, by citizens all across this province, even by the unions, instead of hiking taxes? Why won't you consider these proposals?

Hon Mr Rae: I would say to the honourable member that he's making a number of proposals, some of which I've heard before, some of which I think are

extremely reasonable. I think the suggestion, for example, from the Provincial Auditor with respect to the question of fraud, wherever it is to be found, the question of dealing with improving the management of the health care system, are issues that are of great concern to us and issues which we're dealing with directly. I think you'll find on the management side, on the health care system, this government has done more to control costs—and the people out there know it full well—than any other government in the last half-century. I don't expect the honourable member to stand up and say that or admit that it's true, but those are the facts.

I would say to the honourable member, he can, if he likes, persist in his view that it's possible to deal with the extent of the problem that we have in this province or in this country without dealing with the issue of taxation. I don't happen to agree with him, and we continue to have to address that question.

Mr Harris: The Premier is quite right: We have a fundamental disagreement over taxes, he and I.

GAMBLING

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My second question is to the Premier as well, and this, Premier, regards one of your initiatives from last year's budget.

Last year you announced in your budget a 180-degree shift of policy from this government and in fact from your party and from your election campaign. In fact, not once during the 1990 campaign did you mention you had shifted your support for casino gambling. In fact, you were clearly on the record opposing casinos. You said, "The casino plays on greed."

Premier, given your record against casinos, why do you now feel somehow that you have a mandate from the people of this province to bring casino gambling to Ontario?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): First of all, let's put this in some perspective.

Gaming of various kinds did not suddenly get introduced into the province of Ontario by the New Democratic Party government. Horse racing has been going on in the province for a very long time. Bingos have been under way in the province for decades. Various kinds of casino gaming of a temporary nature have been in place in the province for a very, very long time, and the lottery, of course, has been in place since the mid-1970s, I assume brought in by the Conservative government, since it was in power somewhere between 1372 and 1985.

So I would say to the honourable member that the fact that the government is proposing—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —an opening of a casino in Windsor, which we are establishing as a pilot project that will

give us a chance to assess its impact, its success, if I may say so, in substantial response to a very strongly expressed desire on the part of the people of Windsor as expressed through their city council and other means, I would say to the honourable member, I don't think marks a huge departure for this province. I don't even think it marks a huge departure for the New Democratic government. It was, I remind you—

The Speaker: Could the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: —a New Democratic Party government in Manitoba which introduced the casino in the hotel in Winnipeg.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: I don't see it as any huge departure. It's simply a fairly modest response—

The Speaker: Would the Premier please take his seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Would the Premier please take his seat. Supplementary?

Mr Harris: Premier, there have been many jurisdictions in the United States that have changed their status quo on casino gambling, but only after they held a referendum on legalized gambling: Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Florida, Ohio, to name a few.

Some of the people there endorsed plans after being given an opportunity to have their say; others turned them down. But at least there the public was given an opportunity to voice their opinion before their government unilaterally imposed a reversal of the status quo.

I would ask you this, Premier: Given your stand on casino gambling, given what you have said in the last election, do you not think it would be fair to ask Ontarians for their opinions, either by an election—and I don't really expect you're going to give them that opportunity in this particular climate, so I would offer you the other option, which many American city and state jurisdictions have used: by giving them a referendum before implementing this about-face in position and before significantly changing the lifestyle of communities in Ontario?

The Speaker: Could the leader place his question, please.

1430

Mr Harris: Are you prepared to do that, Premier?

Hon Mr Rae: I think the honourable member—if I can cut to the core of his question, there was one option which I must say didn't leap to my mind as being the first one that I would jump to. But on the other one, I would say to him that, first of all, as a matter of policy, we would never, ever impose a facility of this kind on any community that did not want one. Secondly, I

would say to the honourable member that in the event that a city council—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: If I could, Mr Speaker. In the event that a city council—I'm having difficulty, not getting the words out but getting them heard. In the event that a city council decided, in its wisdom, that it wanted to hold a referendum with respect to a question, that would be entirely up to the city council and there would be no objection from this government at all if that's how a city council chose to respond.

But we've made it very clear that where there is an objection from a city council, we would not be intending to proceed. It's entirely up to a city as to whether or not to encourage that to happen.

Mr Harris: Premier, the first thing that has changed has been provincial policy, the NDP party's position and Bob Rae's position. Some have argued that the party hasn't changed but they've lost control of their leader.

Premier, your minister has kept secret a report done by the Windsor Police Services Board which calls for the need for increased police resources as a result of casino gambling coming to Windsor. There is no doubt that communities in Ontario will significantly change if a casino comes to town. As Donald Trump says, "Gaming doesn't come cheap." I have to agree with a lot of the critics on that. It brings crime, it brings prostitution, it brings a lot of the things that maybe areas didn't have before. There is a big cost to pay. Surely the Premier would agree with me that it brings a lot of things that bingo doesn't bring. I don't think he's suggesting that bingos and bingo players bring these kind of things that Donald Trump is saying.

Given this, Premier, given that a significant change is going to come to the community of Windsor, given that there's been a significant provincial change, or that you wish to change policy, significantly different from the status quo and different from what you campaigned on, will you hold, as most other jurisdictions in the United States got the opportunity to do, a referendum on whether Ontario should allow full-blown casino gambling in the province of Ontario, a change from that which you campaigned on? Will you do that?

Hon Mr Rae: As I've indicated to the honourable member, the government has no plans for a province-wide referendum. But certainly if a municipality chose to have one with respect to whether they would ask for one or seek one in a municipality, that's entirely up to a municipality.

You're assuming, if I may say so—I don't know what Donald Trump was referring to exactly, but I do know that to compare having a single facility in a community like Windsor with situations in some of the American jurisdictions is completely outlandish and bears no

relationship to the world of reality.

I would say to him as well that the whole reason for taking the measured approach that we have in terms of having a pilot project, making the assessment of the impact, being able to assess the impact on a case-by-case basis, the whole reason for doing it is to allow us to make the kinds of assessments that need to be made in a practical, pragmatic, reasonable way, rather than reaching the sorts of conclusions the leader of the third party now seems to have arrived at. I would say to him that that's the approach we're taking. I happen to think it's a very reasonable, practical, sensible kind of approach.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My question is for the Premier. Premier, we continue to raise in this House our concerns about this government's lack of commitment to the young people of this province and, most specifically, our concern with the fact that there will be fewer job opportunities for students and young people this summer because of government cutbacks.

I know, Premier, that you and your ministers have consistently denied that this is in fact the case, but today we've learned that another program for young people, the two-year internship program for visible minorities, women and the disabled, has been eliminated.

Premier, it was just five weeks ago that your government advertised this program offering 91 jobs, 91 jobs that would have provided young people with a real opportunity to get the kind of training and experience they need in the workplace, and you had thousands of applicants for those 91 jobs. Five weeks later, they're told the program is cut.

You will remember, Premier, that when we asked this question before, we were told by the Minister of Education and Training, and it was repeated by you in answering another question, that there had been no cuts, no reduction in support for programs for young people. It is clear to us that in fact your spending cuts have resulted in cuts to job programs for young people. Premier, it is time to tell the whole story, and I would ask you to tell us exactly what youth employment programs have been reduced or cut as a result of your expenditure control plan and other spending cuts.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I would refer that to the Chairman of Management Board.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): The Leader of the Opposition referred in her question to the employment equity internship program, and she's equating that program somehow with the answers that I and the Minister of Education and Training have given here in the House with regard to summer employment programs for

students. It is neither a summer employment program nor is it anything other than a program for employment equity internship.

It is a two-year program. The article in the Toronto Star this morning suggested that the program has been cancelled. It has not been cancelled. The program in fact has been cut in half for two years. All of the second-year participants in the program will continue this year. For this one year, the program will take no first-year applicants, and next spring we'll start accepting first-year applicants again.

Mrs McLeod: The answers just lead to more and more confusion. We understand this program has been cut: There are no applicants being accepted and none of the applications are being processed. This is in fact a program that affects mostly young people, according to the program's director. And we're not confusing it with summer employment programs; we know this is a different program. We are also concerned about summer employment programs, the same summer employment programs that you tell us have not been cut but which in fact have been cut, the same summer employment programs which you told us were in place now, but as of this morning the agencies tell us it will be weeks before the funds for those programs are confirmed.

We want some straight answers. We don't know what to believe when your government keeps talking day after day about its concern for young people. I would just point to other parts of your record, Minister. In the last budget, this government cut OSAP payments by \$10 billion. Students that are accepted into colleges this year, with the letters of acceptance that went out on Saturday, have been accepted conditionally, pending the outcome of the social contract negotiations.

We've just been talking about the medical students, the residents and interns who've completed 10 years of their university education program and are being told that there is no alternative from this government other than to leave this province.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the leader place her supplementary, please.

Mrs McLeod: Now we see that five weeks ago ads were placed for the internship program, and the program is cut. I ask you, how can you keep saying to young people that you are concerned about them when every action you take just takes more jobs and more hope away for the young people of this province? Why are young people not on the agenda of your government?

Hon Mr Charlton: Obviously, the Leader of the Opposition doesn't understand what has been going on or what this government has just been through. I think it has been made clear by the Minister of Finance and by the Premier and by others that the government has just been through a very serious expenditure reduction effort. The employment equity internship program is a

two-year program which is designed to take in graduates, not students, and to hopefully see that they get placed in the civil service. The civil service is in the process of downsizing. I think that's been a major part of the debate here in the Legislature this spring around the social contract and a number of other issues.

We wanted to ensure that the dollars we spent on youth in this budget were spent in the most effective way that we could. We wanted to ensure that we didn't in fact have to cut and reduce the number of, for example, student jobs that were available through a variety of programs that this government provides this summer. The internship program is a program that we were having difficulty placing those people from, because we're going through a downsizing in the OPS. We tried to make the cuts in the most effective way to have the least impact on young people and to ensure that our summer employment programs this summer provided as many jobs to students as they did last year.

1440

HEALTH CARE

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): My question is to the Minister of Health. The government's draconian decision to slash fees paid to new physicians by 75% will effectively lock out 2,500 doctors now in training and 400 physician graduates.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Jim Wilson: The Treasurer listens to the questions from the opposition about as well as he listens to the business community in this province.

My question to the Minister of Health is: Your decision to slash fees paid to new physicians will effectively lock out 2,500 doctors now in training and 400 physician graduates this year in Ontario. Minister, will you table in this House today any needs-based studies—not doctor-population ratios, but actual patient-needs-based studies done by the government which have led you to declare that there are too many family doctors, paediatricians and psychiatrists practising in Metropolitan Toronto?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Let me, before I answer, take issue with the wording in the preamble to the member's question. He says "our decision to slash fees to new entrants to the profession." I have said, on a number of occasions in this House and elsewhere, that we have made a number of proposals to the Ontario Medical Association, proposals that didn't come to it as any surprise. On the proposal to have a differential fee for new physicians, the OMA was authorized by its counsel a year ago to discuss with the ministry, precisely because studies of resources that have been done by all provinces and a national agreement that was reached earlier last year indicated that Ontario was one of the few provinces not to have put

some restrictions on the amount of billing and the entry of new physicians to the profession.

The discussion, the proposals, are all on the table for negotiation with the Ontario Medical Association, and that is where they will be resolved.

With respect to ratios and numbers, I'm sure the member, as a very effective critic, is well aware that the royal college of physicians and surgeons has standards for number of doctors per patients that are used by both the profession and the ministry to determine where there is a need. What has to happen is to make sure we have the appropriate professionals meeting the needs of areas and of special populations across the entire province.

Mr Jim Wilson: It's very interesting how the minister really fudges her answer to this question. The decision to cut fees paid to new physicians in this province is contained in the government's expenditure control plan, and if we're to believe the expenditure control plan which was put out some weeks ago by the Treasurer, then there's no alternative but to believe that these are actual decisions taken and that they are not part of the social contract talks. The minister always tries to fudge the two.

Minister, you talk about saving money. Leaving aside for the moment the frustration and anger felt by hundreds of medical graduates who have been told that their home province doesn't want them, do you think taxpayers enjoy the fact that they have spent \$2 million per doctor on education and training only to have these doctors locked out of practice in Ontario and forced to move south of the border to help subsidize Bill and Hillary Clinton's health care reform?

Hon Mrs Grier: That is a ridiculous suggestion. Let me remind the member that the negotiations with the Ontario Medical Association are quite separate from the social contract and are part of the framework agreement that the ministry or the province has with the OMA, and that one of the other proposals on that negotiating table is a way in which physicians—and there are almost 2,000 of them—who have passed the average retirement age of 65 can in fact be encouraged to take a retirement in order that there will be room for the new physicians who, the member is quite right, are anxious to begin practice in Ontario.

He's also right that the taxpayers have funded their education, as the taxpayers have funded the education of architects and engineers and nurses and many other professionals. And the taxpayers are saying, legitimately, "We want to make sure that those new doctors practise in areas where they're really needed"—in northern Ontario, in parts of Metropolitan Toronto, where there are populations that are suffering because, under the current fee-for-service system, there are not doctors there to meet their needs.

Managing resources within the health care system is

a major challenge. It is a challenge that every province is undertaking, and it is a challenge that, together with the profession, we will manage in this province too.

The Speaker: The Minister of Environment and Energy has a response to a question asked earlier.

CLEANUP OF INDUSTRIAL SITE

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The MPP for Mississauga North asked a question last week and I indicated I would get back to him. Unfortunately, I was ill, so I wasn't able to. I will now at this point.

He raised a concern about what he considered to be a delay in a cleanup of PCBs in and around Smithville. The cleanup of the PCBs in and around Smithville is being managed in four phases. There has been no delay in the PCB remediation-cleanup programs associated with the Smithville PCB storage site located in the Smithville industrial park.

Phase 3 of the program for the cleanup and destruction by incineration of all stored PCBs on the site and all the PCBs-contaminated earth down to the bedrock, both on and adjacent to the site, was completed in December 1992. The contractor is now working on grading and landscaping the area. The work is expected to be completed this June.

The program has been conducted successfully and all cleanup and environmental standards are being met. To date, over \$50 million has been spent on cleanup and remediation programs.

An agreement between the municipal council, the public liaison committee and my ministry is very close to being finalized. This agreement will establish a three-party management board of directors that will oversee phase 4 of the Smithville remediation. Through the project management team, research has been undertaken and pilot projects run aimed at developing the technology to deal with the PCBs on the rock aquifer.

This research will be fully funded by the ministry and, when the research is completed, we will hopefully have the proper technology to deal with this difficult problem.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): With respect to the response, I think that clearly just underlines the problem. In the last part of the response by the minister, he said that there's going to be further study. I can tell the Minister of Environment that those studies have in fact been completed.

Work was scheduled to be started this summer. As a result of your fiscal restraint in the matter of cleanups, as was outlined in the report by the Treasurer—work in Smithville with respect to the cleaning up of that area was to have been commenced this summer. It is now no longer going to be started this summer.

All you are doing is further studying the problem when those studies have in fact been completed. We

need a commitment from you and the people in Smithville need a commitment from you that cleanup will take place, will be carried out without any further delay.

Hon Mr Wildman: I didn't note a question or an interrogatory in the member's statement. But the commitment to completing the necessary research work and studies to determine how we can clean up the rock aquifer will be done. It is there.

1450

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): My question is for the Minister of Education and Training. Minister, late last week Ontario colleges began to send out letters of acceptance to over 70,000 students applying for admission, but because of your government's social contract talks, colleges are saying their offers of acceptance are conditional upon the outcome of these same talks. In other words, 70,000 students across the province are having their future put on hold while your government fumbles with a restraint program.

Minister, how can you, as the person specifically responsible for the future of these students, possibly permit this situation to exist?

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): The letters that were sent out by the colleges last week were the decision of the presidents of the individual colleges when they decided to make this move. Not all colleges have decided to take that approach. I believe that if you take a look at the numbers, the colleges are in fact projecting that they should be able to have increased enrolments, and the numbers of students in places have actually increased considerably over the last couple of years.

Yes, I would agree that there is some uncertainty until the social contract talks are completed. There are some time lines associated with those contract talks and it would be in the interest of all parties to have those talks completed in a positive way as quickly as possible.

Mr McGuinty: Minister, you may find that uncertainty acceptable, but I certainly don't. It's important to understand what we're talking about here. Letters of acceptance have always in the history of this province, without fail, been good news in the life of a student; that is, until now.

By some remarkable manoeuvring, this government has managed to twist one of the most important pieces of news that young people receive in their lives into something, in some ways, even worse than outright refusal. Colleges are saying to their students: "Your future's on hold. We may or may not have a space for you. Just hang tight." All of this was brought about by your government's ineptitude in economic planning, and don't try to slough it off on to the colleges.

Will you here today assure those 70,000 students who have obtained a qualified acceptance, or who will

shortly be obtaining such, that you will speak up for them at the social contract table and that you will guarantee them their acceptances and that they can get on with their lives and plan accordingly?

Hon Mr Cooke: The member knows that it is absolutely impossible for the minister to guarantee anybody a place in the colleges, but it's obviously very clear that the vast majority, if not all of those students, will in fact be accepted.

But one of the difficulties we have in the college system right now in Ontario is that the system had been neglected for a number of years. I look here at the increases in operating grants that were provided by the Liberal government when it was in power and the fact that we were in the best of all economic times, with revenues going up double-digit, and your government did nothing to rebuild the college system in this province at all. That's when we should have been investing in our education system, and if we've got difficulties now, it's because of your lack of foresight in the education system.

DAY CARE

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, there has been a lot of controversy about your government's handling of day care in this province over the last two and a half, almost three, years.

Certainly your involvement as the former Minister of Education and now the Minister of Community and Social Services has caused some additional concern, because a leaked cabinet document shows that your government is considering changes to the current system of day care in this province and that you may be poised and ready to set up yet another level of bureaucracy to administer day care subsidies instead of going through the existing mechanism of municipalities.

In the case of York region, York region's community services commissioner recently advised, upon reflecting upon that document, that the current system is a mess and that the government is moving in a very unilateral fashion.

My question, Minister, is, why are you even considering setting up another level of bureaucracy to administer day care in this province, especially the subsidies, when we already have a perfectly good system in place with regional municipalities that pay 20% of the costs?

Hon Tony Silipo (Minister of Community and Social Services): I appreciate the question from the member opposite. He of course is free to read into leaked cabinet documents whatever he wishes, but I can tell him that, far from trying to establish another level of bureaucracy, what we are trying to do is to drastically improve the system of child care in the province.

We are doing that, first, by trying to inject into the

system additional subsidized spaces through the Jobs Ontario initiatives, ones that we think will be a great help both to those people who are trying to get off social assistance, and into the retraining programs, as well as then trying to look over a longer period of time at some of the other significant improvements that we need to bring into the system, including the link between education and child care.

In that prospect and in that process, we certainly know and intend to have a number of important discussions with municipalities because of the interest that they have in the delivery of child care.

Mr Jackson: That just doesn't square with what happened in York region. In York region, the actual committee dealing with recommendations to your government—the region of York was told it could not be on that committee which is looking into the reforms and advising the minister. They've now been put in a position of being responsible, or will be responsible, for moving the current subsidy program so that the subsidy goes directly to the centre and to the parents, and the region, which pays for it, won't have any access.

Minister, you and your government have been fooling around with this whole issue of the delivery of child care, whether it's junior kindergarten, whether it's home day care, whether it's starting day care in our schools as early as age 4. All this you've been playing with at taxpayers' expense, and yet today in Ontario there are fewer children in these day care spaces than ever before.

Now, I ask you, Minister, given your government's record of not consulting municipalities on these social issues—on social assistance reform, for example; on day care—how can you reassure York region, which has now said it will withdraw its 20% contribution for subsidies because your government plans to eliminate it? How can you reassure municipalities that that's not what you're going to do and that you will allow the input from municipalities, and the taxpayers through them, which pay 20% of the child care costs in this province?

Hon Mr Silipo: I can tell the member that I'll certainly look into the issue of York region specifically that he raises, but I would be very surprised if there is any process under way that tries to exclude the municipalities either in the way in which we are going about putting out and making sure that we use the spaces that we've established under the Jobs Ontario initiative or indeed in the discussions that need to continue under the process of reform.

We certainly understand, and I certainly understand as minister, that there's an important role that the municipalities are playing. We know that in a number of municipalities people have said to us very clearly that they want to continue being involved in the delivery of the system and that the very least that we owe them and that we are ensuring will happen is that they are

involved very much with us in the discussions that will lead to, we hope, a better and improved system of child care in the province.

1500

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr Donald Abel (Wentworth North): My question is for the Minister of Finance. I was concerned to read in the Toronto Star this weekend that Judy Darcy, the president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, says that the economic assumptions behind our fiscal plan are insupportable and misleading. Mr Minister, could you please explain to the House why the union and the economic analysis firm that CUPE hired have two different results?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I did read with some interest the comments of the president of CUPE, who I understand received a lot of the analysis from Informetrica, the consultant firm. I think that the main problem with the difference in the numbers has to do with the assumptions of economic growth that are built into the analysis that Informetrica did and which CUPE then used in the press conference that it had.

I think as well that they make the assumption that if we'd proceeded with the almost \$17-billion deficit this year, it would just be business as usual out there, and that simply isn't

the case. Even the conference board said that God only knows what kind of growth we'd have if they proceeded with the \$17-billion deficit in this province.

As well, since there won't be a supplementary, I assume, Mr Speaker, there are some assumptions on the corporate tax side in which it seems to me they've neglected to consider the carry-forward losses that are appropriate for the private sector when they are computing profits.

So there seems to be an assumption there that, first of all, growth will be much more dramatic than most people think it will be and, secondly, that corporate profits will be as high, but they think they will be lot higher than anybody else thinks they'll be.

Mr Abel: Mr Minister, what concerns me the most is that their analysis claims there's going to be a loss of about 70,000 jobs over the next two years. How would they arrive at this conclusion?

Hon Mr Laughren: I'm not at all sure. If you come to the conclusion that the higher the deficit the more economic stimulation there is, it seems to me that's the kind of analysis that gets you into very deep trouble very, very quickly, and that simply would not be sustainable.

As a matter of fact, what we're trying to do will protect jobs and services in community after community all across this province. So I would take issue with their assertion that the budget will cost 70,000 jobs. For one

thing, when the assertion was made, they had not seen the budget, so I'm not too sure how they could come to that conclusion, but our budget is going to put the emphasis on the protection of jobs, not on the costing of jobs in this province.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Time for oral questions has expired.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Very briefly, I want to, under standing order 34(a), serve notice to you orally—I will submit a written filing later this afternoon—of my complete dissatisfaction with the response of the Minister of Health to my question earlier today.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: With respect to what is perhaps a budget leak, I have here a document and I seek your guidance on this. I'd like to read from a memo briefly.

It's regarding the retailing of official road maps in Ontario. The official road map of Ontario has been identified as a product which falls within the scope of—

The Speaker: Order. Would the honourable member please take his seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker: No. Just take your seat, please. At the outset you indicated that this has something to do with the budget, in which case it has nothing to do with the Speaker. The Speaker will deal with procedural matters with respect to this House, but the budget is the domain of the Treasurer and not of the Speaker.

Mr Turnbull: Perhaps you could guide me on this matter.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Turnbull: I am concerned, Mr Speaker. Perhaps somebody can—

The Speaker: The guidance on the matter is that there is no point of order.

PETITIONS

EDUCATION FINANCING

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the British North America Act of 1867 recognizes the right of Catholic students to a Catholic education, and in keeping with this, the province of Ontario supports two educational systems from kindergarten to grade 12/OAC; and

"Whereas the Metropolitan Separate School Board educates more than 102,000 students across Metro Toronto; and

"Whereas these students represent 30% of the total number of students in this area, yet have access to just 20% of the total residential assessment and 9.5% of the pooled corporate assessment; and

"Whereas the Metropolitan Separate School Board is able to spend \$2,188 less on each of its elementary school students and \$2,764 less on each of its secondary school students in our public school counterpart,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to act now and restructure the way in which municipal and provincial tax dollars are apportioned, so that Ontario's two principal education systems are funded not only fully but with equity and equality."

I have signed this petition.

GAMBLING

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of a neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I have affixed my signature to this petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Paul R. Johnson (Prince Edward-Lennox-South Hastings): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition from people who are opposed to casino gambling. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has traditionally portrayed itself as having a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the NDP government has stated that it has a historical concern for the poor in society, who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the NDP in the past has vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos despite the fact that such a decision, a significant change in government policy, was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation;

"That appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with the process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I have signed this petition as I'm in agreement with it.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): I too have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth

in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

This is signed by many individuals from my riding and I too have affixed my signature to it.

1510

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I add a number of names from Windsor, that city in Ontario that's going to have a pilot project, to the petitions against casino gambling.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more vulnerable, emotionally and economically, by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has had a historical concern for the poor in society, who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has, in the past, vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos, despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and very questionable initiative."

I'm very pleased to sign my name to this petition.

GRAVENHURST OPERA HOUSE

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): I have a petition today from a number of residents of the community of Gravenhurst, calling on the government to provide full funding for the restoration of the Gravenhurst Opera House, which was closed by the Ministry of Labour earlier on this year, and I too have affixed my name.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I have signed the petition.

GAMBLING

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It has about 10 signatures and it says the following:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

The particular signatures to this petition are from the Scarborough/Toronto area and join with the labour, business and chambers of commerce and councils from the Bruce area. I have affixed my signature to the petition.

GAMBLING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

Mr Speaker, there are 20 signatures on this petition, and I am happy to support the petition with my signature.

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): I have a petition from several constituents from Kitchener, New Hamburg and Baden. It's a petition opposed to Bill 124, the mandatory bike helmets. They feel it's an infraction of their freedom of choice.

GAMBLING

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I have a couple of petitions, one of these petitions being filed by people in my constituency, but all of the petitioners incredulous that a New Democratic government would succumb to the evils of gambling. I share their incredulity and I submit the petitions on their behalf.

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I've affixed my name to this petition.

Mr Paul Wessinger (Simcoe Centre): I have a petition.

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective.

Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

Mr Speaker, the signators to this particular petition hail from the Pickering area. I affix my signature to it as well. This is one of a collection of petitions which has garnered well over 15,000 signatures in support of the continued operation of Bruce A nuclear generating station.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The time for petitions has now expired.

1520

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993

MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'ÉDUCATION

On motion by Mr Callahan, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 15, An Act to amend the Education Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the honourable member have some comments?

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): The proposed government Bill 4 will eliminate, as I read it, any special education for people who require special education. The purpose of this bill is to ensure that a full range of special education placements is available to exceptional children so that they will have access to the programs that best meet their needs. The bill makes it clear that special education will be available at no cost to the child as well as to the child's parent or guardian. It also gives the child the power to appeal a special education placement.

PROVINCIAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993

SUR LA CONSULTATION POPULAIRE À L'ÉCHELLE PROVINCIALE

On motion by Mr Turnbull, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 16, An Act to obtain the Opinion of the Public on Questions of Provincial Interest / Loi visant à obtenir l'opinion du public sur des questions d'intérêt provincial.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the honourable member have some brief comments?

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): The purpose of the bill is to enable an Ontario elector and the Lieutenant Governor in Council to obtain a referendum on a question that is of general application to Ontario and

that is within Ontario's legislative authority. An elector who wishes a referendum must submit the question to the chief election officer on a petition containing the signatures of at least 15% of the Ontario electors.

The chief election officer must accept every petition that meets certain procedural and substantive requirements and place the question on the ballot for the general election to elect members of the Legislative Assembly. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may order that a referendum be held at a general election to elect members of the Legislative Assembly.

If at least 50% of the electors vote in the referendum and if 60% of those electors vote the same way, than a minister of the crown is required to introduce a bill into the Legislative Assembly that proposes to implement the results of the referendum. The act does not require the minister or any other members of the Legislative Assembly to vote on the bill in any way particular.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993

SUR LE PLAN D'INVESTISSEMENT

On motion by Mr Laughren, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 17, An Act to provide for the Capital Investment Plan of the Government of Ontario and for certain other matters related to financial administration / Loi prévoyant le plan d'investissement du gouvernement de l'Ontario et concernant d'autres questions relatives à l'administration financière.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Does the minister have some opening remarks?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): The Capital Investment Plan Act, 1993, is a key part of the government's 10-point plan to strengthen our economy and support jobs. It is the most comprehensive program of infrastructure renewal in a generation. This new way of doing business means construction of infrastructure projects will begin sooner, be completed faster and create jobs more rapidly.

The bill establishes three new crown corporations: the Ontario Transportation Capital Corp, the Ontario Clean Water Agency and the Ontario Financing Authority. It renews the Ontario Land Corp as a crown agency called the Ontario Realty Corp.

By working together in partnerships and joint ventures with the private and public sectors, the corporations will use new sources of revenue while reducing costs to the taxpayer. These crown corporations will use innovative and entrepreneurial ways to finance investment in economically important infrastructure that will lay the groundwork for Ontario to compete in the 21st century. The bill also enables universities, hospitals and school boards to gain access to loan-based financing for capital projects.

The government is changing the way it does business.

Our new approach will encourage efficient and more cost-effective operations. More jobs will be created, and capital projects vital to preserving the economic strength of this province will be—

The Acting Speaker: On a point of order, the member for Bruce.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): This particular presentation is a statement. It could have been done during statements by the ministers. There was ample time to do that. When the first reading is done, there is a brief explanation of what this does. This sets up the shell game that these people have been contemplating for some time. Mr Speaker, I ask you to call him to order or else I ask for unanimous consent to revert back to statements, and I am prepared to allow him to make his statement.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Would the honourable Minister of Finance summarize briefly, please.

Hon Mr Laughren: I had completed my remarks before the intemperate, silly outburst from the member for Bruce.

CHRONIC CARE PATIENTS' TELEVISION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993

SUR L'INSTALLATION DE TÉLÉVISEURS APPARTENANT À DES MALADES CHRONIQUES

On motion by Mr Ramsay, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 18, An Act to permit Patients receiving Chronic Care to install their own Television or combined Television and Video-Cassette Recorder / Loi permettant aux malades chroniques d'installer leur propre téléviseur ou leur propre combiné téléviseur-magnétoscope à vidéo-cassette.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Would the honourable member have a short summary?

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): The bill gives chronic care patients the right to install their own television or television and combined videocassette recorder in their rooms rather than having to rent such a unit from the hospital or to use the equipment down the hall if they can't make it down to the chronic care facilities that are provided.

I'm quite happy to introduce this bill today. I'd like to thank my legislative intern, John Martelli, for helping me with the research.

VICTIMS BILL OF RIGHTS ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LA DÉCLARATION DES DROITS DES VICTIMES

On motion by Mr Jackson, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 19, An Act to establish the Rights of Victims of Crime / Loi portant déclaration des droits des victimes d'actes criminels.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Would the honourable member have some brief remarks?

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): This is the third time I've tabled this modified bill. It was submitted in 1990 as Bill 113 and in 1991 as Bill 103. Unfortunately, it lacked the support of the two previous governments. I was hopeful that now that this matter is before the standing committee on justice, Ontario being the last province in Canada to enshrine a victims' bill of rights for its citizens, that somehow this bill will assist the government. I invite them to assist in making it a reality.

It recognizes that victims are part of the equation of catching criminals but they should also be compensated and be provided certain basic services which are not codified in our laws. The bill also provides that persons convicted of an offence shall not profit from the offence through their recollections or through public interviews and public appearances.

I would certainly hope that the members of the House will support Ontario, even though it's the last province in Canada, getting victims' rights legislation enshrined for our citizens.

1530

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RYERSON POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE

LA RYERSON POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

Mr Gary Wilson moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 1, An Act to amend The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977 and the University Foundations Act, 1992 / Loi modifiant la loi intitulée The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977 et la Loi de 1992 sur les fondations universitaires.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Mr Wilson has moved second reading of Bill 1. As parliamentary assistant, would he now have some opening remarks?

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): I'm pleased to introduce the second reading of Bill 1, amending The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act. When this bill is passed in the Legislature, Ryerson will become Ryerson Polytechnic University, Ontario's first polytechnic university.

In introducing the second reading of the bill, let me take you back to five weeks ago. That's when Richard Allen, former Minister of Colleges and Universities, announced to an assembly of students, faculty and staff at Ryerson that Ryerson Polytechnical Institute would become Ryerson Polytechnic University.

The response on campus that Sunday afternoon was

joyous. All members of the Ryerson community were pleased to know that their institution of learning would receive full-fledged university status. They were also pleased to know that Ryerson will continue with its special mission of providing applied education to thousands of learners. As Ryerson's president, Terry Grier, put it, "Ryerson University will be equal but different to its university counterparts elsewhere in the province."

Speaking of President Grier, I'm pleased to say that he is in the east lobby with his associates from Ryerson: Dennis Mock, Ron Swirsky, Arnice Cadieux and Debbie Chant. So welcome to the Legislature.

Ryerson students who have taken university-level programs and have met university-level expectations will now receive the same degrees as other students taking similar programs in other universities.

Ryerson is unique in this province. As a university focused on applied learning and research, Ryerson enriches a variety of post-secondary educational opportunities available in Ontario.

Ryerson Polytechnic University will be an institution providing education directly tied to emerging economic goals and societal needs. Its mission will contribute directly to economic renewal. Ontario needs the kind of education that Ryerson provides—an applied education providing a balance between theory and practice.

Ryerson graduates know that the degree they will receive represents an education that allows them to make an immediate contribution to their chosen profession. For an eager, enthusiastic university graduate, that's a good feeling to have. For Ontario, that's proof of a sound investment made for the future.

The economic and educational marketplaces have already recognized the level of education provided by Ryerson. Ryerson alumni have made their mark in many, many fields, such as engineering, business, health care, journalism and urban planning. And let's not overlook the value of applied research. Today's internationally competitive business world is in constant need of innovation. We must continually search for a better way of producing new products and services. Applied research can do this. Applied education, applied research: This is where Ryerson Polytechnic University excels.

As a government, we are dedicated to economic renewal. Ryerson carries out the applied education and applied research so vital to that economic renewal. Ryerson, in the coming years, is poised to make an even stronger and more influential contribution to the quality of life in this province.

I know that my colleagues on all sides of this House support Ryerson in becoming a polytechnic university, and I'd like to acknowledge their support of this bill. Therefore, I am pleased to introduce second reading of

Bill 1, amending the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments? Seeing none, further debate on Bill 1?

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): It gives me great pleasure to participate in this debate and to support Bill 1. I've had the opportunity, the good fortune, to meet with President Grier and his colleagues and to tour the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, as it is presently known, and developed a flavour for the institution and a good understanding, I think, of the background to this bill. For those reasons I lend my full support to it.

One of the things you learn is that this bill is really another step in the natural evolution of Ryerson. It started in 1948, if I might briefly remind the members here, as the Ryerson Institute of Technology. At that time it offered a trades-oriented style of programming, two-year diplomas. It was in 1963 that it became known as the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute and it established a board of governors. Later, there was a bicameral system of governance developed.

In 1971, Ryerson was first given the authority to grant degrees, and a lot of people aren't aware of that. I think it's very important. It was a significant milestone. Ryerson has, for the past 22 years, been giving out degrees. The number of degree designations has been increased over the years to 28. Virtually all of those degree programs have university-level admission requirements and they last four years; they're four years in duration.

So Bill 1 is essentially a formal recognition of what everyone has taken for granted, and that is Ryerson is de facto a university, not only because it's been a degree-granting institution for 22 years, but also for a number of other reasons, including the fact that Ryerson is a full member of the Council of Ontario Universities and the Association of Commonwealth Universities.

Another important fact is that Ryerson students pay university tuition fees which, as you will know, Mr Speaker, are significantly higher, at least twice as high as college tuition fees.

I think another important factor here is that in 1992, this House, through passage of the University Foundation Act, listed in a schedule of universities that were able to access or able to establish a foundation for purposes of fund-raising, right between Queen's and Western, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute.

But apart from its unique programming and the fact that it can't offer post-grad programs at this time, the vital difference between Ryerson today and Ontario universities is that Ryerson's students receive 10% less government support than a student in any other Ontario university program, even though the two, that is, Ryerson and universities, essentially have the same

admission criteria, the same fundamental structure, the same professional recognition for the degrees, the same accreditation received, offer essentially similar degrees. This is obviously a fundamental inequity, and I'm delighted to say that Bill 1 addresses this.

There's been no basis for the justification of this inequity and hence there are no objections to this bill, and I think that's something that is rather remarkable. I've only been here some three years, but never have I seen a bill receive so much support. In fact, I've received no letters of objection to the bill, not even from the university brotherhood, if I might refer to it that way: the people who are going to have to make more room at the table for Ryerson. There has been no objection received from that body, notwithstanding, as I say, that they are going to have share from the same pool in order to assist Ryerson to develop into a full-fledged university with post-graduate programs and additional research capabilities.

I was pleased to learn that the Ministry of Education and Training will be phasing in the additional funding of approximately \$11 million over six years. I think that's appropriate because Ryerson cannot—and I know President Grier himself recognizes this—establish its new post-grad programs and its research programs overnight. The phase-in will allow Ryerson to grow into its full university status in a thoughtful and intelligent manner.

1540

I think it's absolutely critical for me to remark as well at this point that the Minister of Education and Training must not permit Ryerson, or any other university for that matter, to lose its ability to provide a quality post-graduate education and to meet its obligations to provide accessibility and affordability with respect to universities.

I think it's not stretching it too much to say that the future of post-secondary education is at risk in this province. The government must take up the challenge—and I don't believe it has yet—of ensuring that post-secondary education in Ontario is of the very best quality, that it's affordable and that it's accessible.

Right now, in fact, by reducing the funding to universities and colleges both directly and indirectly, I think that accessibility and quality of education is under attack. Furthermore, by eliminating grants to students, there's been a reduction in the affordability, an asset which is something we were proud to have in this province.

I want to come back to Ryerson, though. I'm very pleased to see that Ryerson's distinctive mission will be maintained, and object number three of the bill will provide that one of the objects of the new Ryerson Polytechnic University will be: "The provision of programs of study that provide a balance between theory and application and that prepare students for

careers in professional and quasi-professional fields."

One of the things you learn about Ryerson is that the key to its real strength, the key to what makes it so attractive to its over 12,000 students and the key to what will enable it to play what I believe will be a vital role in our economic recovery, lies in its programs. In particular, there are two special qualities.

The first quality is that it has a unique blend of theoretical and practical application. In other words, it combines classroom experience with time spent in studios, labs or clinical settings or something of that nature, I think the point being that students not only acquire knowledge but they learn how to apply that knowledge.

From an employer's perspective, I must think that a Ryerson graduate would be seen as rather attractive and obviously a potentially valuable asset. The programming, this blend of theoretic and practical application, effectively eases the transition for the student from the academic experience to the workplace.

The second quality related to the programs at Ryerson is that the programs have a career focus and they have a focus on some professional and quasi-professional fields. One measure—and surely it's not the only measure, but one we apply to our full secondary institutions in the province—but surely one measure of success is to determine whether an institution's graduates are able to obtain employment.

In 1989, the latest figure I was able to obtain, Ryerson was able to place 90% of its graduates in employment within six months of graduation. I think that's a remarkable rate of success in terms of placing students with employers. I would be surprised if that percentage had not been decreased at this point in time, given the present economic climate and the lack of jobs, but nevertheless it's certainly a tradition in which the Ryerson people and students can take great pride.

These two qualities, the combination of theoretical and practical in the career focus, are obviously extremely attractive to the growing body of students who feel that the traditional university program is not meeting their needs in one form or another. I have no doubt that Ryerson will continue to fill this need into the future.

My father, as you may know, Mr Speaker, who was a former member for Ottawa South, also spent 27 years in university classrooms. He lectured in English literature and Romantic poets, but he always felt there were still a significant number of students attending his classes who would have been better off spending their time in a learning environment where there was a greater hands-on experience available to them in order to hold their interest and to give them a greater certainty of employment at the end of the day. I don't think there's any doubt from whatever perspective you might bring to this debate; no one can argue surely that there

is not room for Ryerson in our learning culture here in Ontario.

I heartily endorse Bill 1. It has my full support. I'm certain it will enable Ryerson to continue doing the kinds of things that make it distinctive. I feel that it will be a vital part of our post-secondary learning culture in the province and, furthermore, a vital part in strengthening our faltering economy.

I want to congratulate Mr Grier and his colleagues and his students and the faculty at Ryerson for their patience, for the role they have played in bringing this task to fruition. I'm also pleased to learn that the timing of this bill's passage and ultimately its royal assent will enable the students of Ryerson graduating this year to graduate from Ryerson Polytechnic University.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments.

Mr John Sola (Mississauga East): I'd like to congratulate my colleague from Ottawa South. I think he convinced me when he mentioned that his father would have agreed with this, because I was a great admirer of his father.

He listed a long list of important factors for recognizing Ryerson to become a full-fledged university, but I think he left out one which, to me, would probably be the most important, and that is, my daughter Vesna is presently a student at that institution and I would appreciate it if she could graduate from a university.

I would like to also take this opportunity to express a potential conflict of interest and I would ask you to render a decision on whether I would be in conflict in voting on this bill. I think this bill is an excellent bill. I intend to give it my support, but I would like to get your decision on that matter.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Ottawa South has two minutes in response.

Mr McGuinty: Just very briefly, I apologize to my colleague for the oversight in leaving out that other critically important reason for supporting the passage of this bill.

But in seriousness, I know that this will mean a great deal to this year's graduating class in terms of being able to have inscribed on their degree, their diploma, that Ryerson is a university. It's not going to, in any real sense, alter the quality of the programming, the quality of the education that's available to students there, but in the broader scene there's still a great deal internationally of—I wouldn't call it bewilderment so much as confusion with respect to Ryerson's status, and this will, I think, go a long way towards enabling Ryerson to make those forays into the international scene and to take some comfort in knowing that it will be properly recognized as an institute of higher learning and particularly a university.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate on Bill 1.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I would like to

say a few words with respect to the second reading of Bill 1, which essentially makes Ryerson Ontario's first polytechnical university. We talk about the need for improving the quality of education in this province, whether it be at the secondary level or the post-secondary level, and it's something that's on all of our minds continually. I certainly welcome Ryerson to the university community and hope that this bill passes.

I will say that when we read some of the articles that have been put forward recently, particularly by people in the post-secondary community, we get concerned with the issue of funding. As I understand it, this bill, if it passes, will mean "Ryerson will gain up to \$18 million in provincial financing over the next six years as grants are brought up to par with other full-fledged universities." I'm reading from a news clipping from the Toronto Star of April 7 where this was one of the first times it was reported.

1550

I will say that that is the financial impact on Ryerson, that it will get more funding for its programs. However, I notice that some of the administrative officials from Ryerson are in the House today, in the gallery, and I must say, my observations of watching the various universities around this province and the fears as to where they're going to find their next dollar to provide funding must give these administrative officials some concern in joining this community, because this government certainly has not shown good faith in providing the funding that's necessary to improve the post-secondary quality of education in this province.

Of course, one reads the latest article from Education Today in which our Minister of Education is prominently described as being a crusader for change. You can take that for what it's worth, but there is an article by a Mike Benson talking mainly about the secondary education, but it does talk about the concern of this philosophy of education that is predominant throughout the province.

Mr Benson, in this article which is featured in the March-April 1993 issue of Education Today, which is Ontario's education magazine and is published by the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, states that "although education is a costly public service (and always will be so), it is also a vitally important one for our future economic wellbeing. It is an investment. In an emerging post-industrial, information-based economy, education will be crucial to that other important component of any debt reduction strategy: long-term wealth creation."

So for that reason, I would hope that members of the House will be unanimous in supporting this bill, because certainly we need more post-secondary education, particularly universities such as Ryerson. I certainly wish them well in their ventures. As the member for Kingston and The Islands said in his introductory

remarks, we must be continually searching for new ways to provide education to the people of Ontario. I don't think those were his precise words, but it was a summary of one of his comments.

With respect, as I understand it, Ryerson will be allowed to offer masters degrees and doctorates, but that will take a period of time. I don't think that they will be doing that initially, as that will be spread over a number of years.

One of two criticisms that seem to be coming out after the introduction of this bill was the concern of smaller classes, the concern that more teachers will turn to research. That's a continual complaint, of course, with the educational community at the university level. I suppose it is a genuine concern that the students of Ryerson will be concerned if this bill passes and Ryerson does become a university, that there will be a fear of—I'm sorry; I meant larger class sizes as opposed to smaller class sizes, that there will be smaller class sizes as more—I'm still getting it wrong—with respect to more teachers turning to research.

Finally, the other criticism is that only 26% of its professors hold doctorates currently, and I suppose that will increase, notwithstanding the fact that in other Ontario universities an average of 67% of faculty members have earned doctorates. So Ryerson will be, in those areas, somewhat behind the other universities, and perhaps hopefully, with the appropriate funding incentives from this province, those facts will change.

However, I do wish to spend a few brief moments on the whole issue of funding to post-secondary education, specifically with respect to universities, because that is what we are doing: We are creating another university in the province of Ontario.

This letter is a little out of date, but I'm going to refer to a few paragraphs from it because it does express the concern that's been given by the Council of Ontario Universities. The letter is addressed to myself, and I would assume it's been sent to all members of this House. It was dated last September, but it concerned the whole financial and overcrowding concern that is going on in our universities. It referred to a report that was just released by the Council of Ontario Universities called the Financial Position of Universities in Ontario: 1992.

The writer of this letter, who was Peter George, the president, wanted to emphasize to all of us the concerns that the report had put forward. I'm going to quote very briefly from it:

"Your Ontario universities have lost significant financial ground in the past 15 years.

"Since 1977-78, expenditures per student in Ontario universities have decreased by more than 13%. By contrast, expenditures per student in elementary and secondary education have increased by 37.2%. The

recent OECD findings indicate that Canada spends more of its GDP on education than other industrialized nations. Our study clearly indicates the money is not being spent on university education."

That's the concern of the Council of Ontario Universities and it will be a concern, I'm sure, of Ryerson—I believe it will be called Ryerson Polytechnic University; I hope I've got the name correctly—as well if it joins the university community.

The letter goes on by saying:

"Since 1977-78, the universities' share of the provincial budget has declined from almost 6% to barely more than 4%.

"Since 1977-78, Ontario's support of its universities has lagged behind economic growth; university grants have grown 15% less than the economy, whereas provincial government expenditures have grown by 25% more than the economy.

"On several bases, whether per student, per capita or by income or wealth measure, Ontario's support of universities continues to rank at or near the bottom of Canadian provinces. Only Nova Scotia provides lower operating grants per student.

"Universities in Ontario are much less well funded than private and state universities in the United States, and the gaps are increasing. Michael Porter, John Kenneth Galbraith and Lester Thurow have all warned of the adverse consequences of underfunding higher education. What do you think Ontario's funding record implies for Ontario's competitiveness within the North American free trade arena?

"There is clear evidence of the economic value of university education: Over 84% of the population with university degrees participate in the labour force, unemployment rates among university graduates are consistently the lowest of any sector in the labour force, and university degree-holders earn significantly higher incomes than persons without degrees. Indeed, projections are that half of all new jobs created by the year 2000 will require 17 or more years of education."

Obviously, there is a need for this university that's being proposed by Bill 1, and I think we should all support it, but at the same time, members of this government on all three sides should emphasize the fact that there has been a lack of funding to post-secondary education, particularly in the university sector.

As I say, the \$18 million that will be brought up over the next six years, I hope this commitment that's being made to Ryerson will be honoured, what with the government cutting back left and right and specifically in the education field. Education is a most important commodity if we're going to compete in all areas of industrial growth in this world, and I'll tell you, we are falling behind.

I'd like to refer to a very brief set of figures that the

government has given in cuts, which concerns me and should concern the people of Ryerson as to where we're going on the emphasis of financing of university education in this province.

The plan of the government has outlined \$269.9 million in cuts for the department of colleges and universities for the fiscal 1993-94 year. That includes the restructuring allocation which has been reduced from \$56 million to \$25 million, a savings, as they call it, of \$31 million. New program starts under the university research incentive fund will not be approved in 1993-94, a savings, as they call it, of \$3 million. General operating grants for colleges and universities will be reduced by 0.8%, a savings, as the government calls it, of \$22 million. Thirty million dollars in planned expenditures for 1993-94 will be deferred until next year, a savings, as this government calls it, of \$30 million. Finally, the changes previously announced will save \$178 million.

1600

The emphasis is on savings, as this government puts it, the determination to cut the budget. But is that the appropriate thing to cut? Our universities are having a more and more difficult time to operate. Tuitions are going up and it's more and more difficult for our young people and older people to attend university because of the unbelievably high cost of education. We have a great need to support our universities, and I would submit that this government is not honouring that need. Certainly I am very, very dubious about its honour to help assist this new university that will be created.

The social contract document contains wage-saving targets of \$520 million for schools and \$170 million for colleges and universities. That's the plan of this so-called social contract. In order to realize savings for the provincial government, operating grants will need to be cut by these amounts.

I think we should look forward to this university prospering, but I'll tell you, across this province we're all concerned as to where this government is taking us in post-secondary education and particularly in the area of colleges and universities.

Obviously, the Progressive Conservative Party has tried to deal with this issue in a document called *New Directions, Volume 2: A Blueprint for Learning in Ontario*. I would recommend, if you haven't read this, that other members of this House refer to it. It does deal specifically with a couple of areas that I would like to refer to.

The federal government has estimated that by the end of this century almost half of the new jobs created will require more than five years of education beyond high school.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Is this Brian Mulroney?

Mr Tilson: No, this is the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario putting forward a blueprint for education in this province, which is a heck of a lot more than the education that you're putting forward.

Mr Elston: But you're reading Brian Mulroney's stuff. You're actually reading Mulroney's stuff, right?

Mr Tilson: The federal government has estimated that by the end of the century almost half of the new jobs created will require more than five years of education beyond high school. Post-secondary education has never been more important for the future.

Mr Elston: You guys never give up, do you?

Mr Tilson: Mr Speaker, I wonder if we could control the member for Bruce.

Post-secondary education has never been more important for the future of Ontario's young people, yet our colleges and universities have been weakened by a decade of underfunding. In too many cases, classes are overcrowded, equipment is obsolete, library facilities are inadequate and buildings are deteriorating. Ontario currently ranks 9th out of 10 provinces in operating grants for university students.

As I hope and assume that this bill will pass, I again express the grave concern that I have as to the funding that's being put forward by this government in assisting the universities to stay open and operate and provide the necessary university education that the young people—in fact all the people of Ontario—require.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Questions or comment?

Mr Charles Harnick (Willowdale): I rise to congratulate my colleague the member for Dufferin-Peel for recognizing, as our party does, the importance of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute as a degree-granting institution.

It's interesting to note that we in our party have developed a document called *New Directions, Volume 2: A Blueprint for Learning in Ontario*, and that document is a document to provide excellence in education in the province of Ontario. We support this piece of legislation because we believe it will support our concept of excellence in education at this institution for the betterment of the province of Ontario.

While my friend was speaking, my colleague the member for Bruce was indicating that we were reading from a Mulroney type of document. Nothing could be further from the truth. We were reading from a document that we are developing by way of policy to constructively criticize what the government does today. I ask my friend from Bruce, where are your policies? Where is anything but bald criticism coming from the member for Bruce and from his party? We don't know where the Liberals stand on this piece of legislation, or on any piece of legislation, for that matter, because they don't believe in the development of policy.

We in the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party are developing policies, and in so far as education is concerned, those policies are directed towards excellence in education. When my friend, my colleague the member for Dufferin-Peel stands with the New Directions series, we can point to a document that says because of our concept of education, which is broadly known within the community in Ontario, we can therefore support what the NDP is doing in this particular instance because it supports excellence in education and it supports a proper view to the future in so far as Ryerson is concerned.

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): I want to thank, first of all, the member opposite and the member before him, from the Liberal caucus, for getting up and speaking to this bill in order to ensure the fast passage of this legislation that I'm sure we recognize is well overdue, something hopefully that could have been done a long time ago.

I want to speak quickly, though, to the member for Dufferin-Peel in regard to the whole question of funding. I'm going to skate somewhere where politicians don't like to skate sometimes and tread out a little bit here.

One of the things that strikes me in the whole debate around this issue and around the greater issues of funding in the province of Ontario, like in other jurisdictions, is that there is an argument that seems to be coming from two sides of the same coin. What I mean by that is that it's one thing to stand in the Legislature and to stand in opposition and to say the government should be doing whatever in regard to going in one direction or the other, but the problem is that the member stands up and says, on the one hand, he wants this government to spend more money in order to build up our post-secondary education system—I agree all of us would like to be able to do that—and in another minute in question period the Leader of the Opposition will get up and say that the government is spending far too much money or not enough money. It seems to be an inconsistent position.

I think we need to be honest with the people of Ontario, the same way that we need to be honest, I think, as all politicians from all levels.

We are into a situation now, not only in the province of Ontario but across all of the jurisdictions of Canada and North America, I would say, that governments find themselves in a position where there are not enough dollars to pay for the services we've built up over the years, and that puts us in a very difficult position as politicians, that we have to make some choices. I would say those choices are very difficult. We have to do things sometimes that we really would rather not be doing, but we can't forget and we have to recognize that we have to face the fiscal reality we find ourselves in.

For the members of the opposition to get up and cry

that we need to spend more money, I really think you're doing a disservice to the people of Ontario. I think we need to learn how to redirect our dollars to make sure of their most effective use for the taxpayers of Ontario and we need to make sure that we have efficiencies in the system. I urge the member to work with us on that.

Mr Elston: I wasn't going to join in the two-minute speeches until I heard some of the material that came from the member for Willowdale and my good friend from Dufferin-Peel, an up-and-coming new member, but new none the less, and he needs to remember a few pieces of information.

One is, first of all, that his leader, the member for Nipissing, is the fellow who is yelling at Bob Rae almost daily that they should chop, axe and cut anything that moves or looks like it provides excellence in anything.

Mr Harnick: Waste.

Mr Elston: I have never before heard such a diatribe in my life from the member for Dufferin-Peel, who in suggesting that their material, that so-called blueprint—

Mr Harnick: Spend, spend, spend. They got us into this problem.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, the member for Willowdale.

Mr Elston: —is going to provide some kind of excellence in education when these people want to axe and just remove any kind of invigorating and creative activity, not only in education but in health care and all across this particular province.

I have looked at the blueprint, and it is a blueprint, all right. There is no detail in that thing at all. You cannot build on that. Lots of nice words on it, lots of nice paper, lots of nice graph-like things, but I'll tell you, it would not give us one advantage at all. In fact, it would not advantage the people at Ryerson one iota, because at the backdrop of the blueprint for their education, or whatever, is their propensity to cut and axe anybody or anything that wants to be creative, that wants to develop the educational skills in our young people that will really make us competitive in the long term.

Mr Harnick: Spend and tax.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Willowdale.

Mr Elston: It's interesting that these people from the Conservative Party think that our party has no ideas in terms of creating new policy. There is a leader's conference. Lyn McLeod is holding a conference on June 4 and 5 which will focus on these very items, because we're going back to the grass roots to get them to feed us again. We're not elitist like the PCs and we don't want to axe and crash our very good educational system.

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Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I think it's a mistake for any politician to get into debate about who's more élite than the other. Sincerely, Mr Speaker, I don't think the Liberal Party necessarily takes a back seat to anybody when it comes to élitism.

Mr Elston: Is that so?

Mr Stockwell: Well, the electorate thought so three years ago.

To the member for Cochrane South, who just got up and started explaining what a responsible party in opposition should do, that has got to be the height of—it's absolutely unbelievable that any member opposite should even have the guts to stand up and start questioning the ethics and the morals of opposition parties when he represents a party which, may I suggest, was devoid of any rational, sensible thought, of actual thoughtful opposition.

This party which is in government now, everyone will tell you, was opposed to anything that didn't mean more spending: spend, spend, spend, spend. Even the champion spenders, the Liberal government, would never satisfy you people. It was never enough. It was never enough on education. It was never enough on any issue.

So may I suggest that for a member from that government to stand up and suggest that opposition parties should be a little more consistent in their message—I know I have the Agenda for People still in hand. I know what their message as an opposition party was, which has absolutely no relationship to the kind of government you've been providing the people of this province.

I don't want to hear any more lectures on what a responsible opposition party is, about integrity, consistency and a moral high ground. You haven't got any high ground on any issue, let alone moral high ground or integrity high ground. Please stop those speeches. Nobody's buying them any more. Humble up a bit. It's getting rather nauseating.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Dufferin-Peel, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr Tilson: I would like to thank the members for Willowdale, Cochrane North, Bruce and Etobicoke West for their contribution to this debate.

The Liberals and of course the NDP are basically saying the same thing as they always have, and that is that they're supporting these cuts. I simply put forward to them that if you're going to compete on the international market, you're going to have to educate the people of Ontario, the young people, and if you don't do it, we're going to become a third-rate nation. It's as simple as that. To simply support these cuts is inexcusable.

I will say the basis of my thoughts and I think the thoughts of this Progressive Conservative Party, the

thoughts that have been expressed by the member for Willowdale; that is, emphasizing the excellence in education. If we don't do that, we're going to fail.

You can put forward all the universities you want. You can create university after university after university, but if you don't provide the funding to improve the quality of this education, to compete with the Europeans and the Asians, we're going to become zero, we're going to become absolutely zero. That's the fear, and that's why I took the time to read some of the concerns that have been put forward by the educational community, particularly at the university level.

We're in difficult times. I agree with the member for Cochrane North that we are in a difficult time. It's tough. Education is tough to put forward. We are in a period of recession, perhaps the worst financial times we've had since the Depression. On the one hand, I sympathize with you: You have to make cuts and it is difficult for you. But if you don't emphasize education, we're going to fail, we're going to fail as a people.

So I encourage the passing of this bill, but I would say you take a second look at the whole issue of funding the university system. Don't leave it up to the commission. Make some decisions yourself.

The Deputy Speaker: Further debate.

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to speak on the second reading of Bill 1.

I'd like to say first off that it gives me pause when I look over what has been said by the group here in the House today over the last 10 minutes. I'm very happy at times to be an independent member and to have the opportunity of listening to the kinds of conversations that we hear between all the various parties and their various agendas. But I want to say that on this bill, we come to a bill which essentially has unanimous support in the House. That is the thing that needs, I believe, to be communicated to the people of Ontario.

In 1948, Ryerson began its illustrious history and began to teach students and began to employ teachers in an attempt to try to bring a different perspective on applied education. They have succeeded magnificently over the years. It is because of that success, it is because they have been able to establish a centre of excellence and true higher learning, that they have come to the point today where we can ensure that they can move now to be a full degree-granting institution and continue on the very good work that they have begun.

When Mr Grier speaks of the words "equal but different," he speaks in a very true way about the multifaceted education reality which is Ryerson. Many people have talked about the engineering courses and programs in health care and business, but I'd like to take a very different focus and also mention the other areas that they are involved in: theatre, radio and

television arts, social work, areas indeed where they have shown such excellence and they have been able to provide opportunities for people to be employed in those various areas.

I have spoken many times over the years to people who have not only graduated from those courses and programs but people who teach in those programs, and I have seen a commitment to higher learning which is again an example that we must strive for and continue to strive for.

The motto of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute is "Mente et artificio," which means, I am told, with mind and application. If we begin to think about that motto in regard to the work that has been done since 1948, what we see is that it is not just a motto or something which honours the insignia of Ryerson, but rather it is in a sense the goal and the underlying philosophy of education which that institution has had since the very beginning of its foundation.

The mind is a very, very important thing. We have entrusted to this institution the opportunity to increase knowledge in our society, to give leadership, to build spirit and character, and it has taken that opportunity and has used it as a jumping-off place to ensure that our society in Ontario is a vibrant and dynamic society. A great deal of thanks must go to those who began this whole adventure of Ryerson, and great thanks must be given to the membership of that faculty and the students of Ryerson today, as they continue to work towards the establishment of that vision and that goal.

I'd like to speak just very briefly now about one thing. I'm going to diverge considerably from some of my colleagues who have spoken about the importance of our global economy and linking the kinds of education that take place at Ryerson and other higher-learning institutions with creating jobs. There are other reasons for higher education. We have these institutions of higher learning, institutions of excellence, not just to create jobs in our society.

They have, I believe, a more important function. That function is to help create spirit, to help create the abilities and the knowledge base that young people are going to have to encompass if they are to be members of our society using their talents and their abilities for the betterment of all: not just for themselves, but for the betterment of all.

In fact, at times I worry that when we make this linkage between jobs and education, we do a disservice to the whole educational journey. I believe that Ryerson has placed the focus of its endeavours in education in the right way. They have looked at students and they have shown students that there are ways to live and to learn and to be in community, and that vision they have imparted to students has led to a more vibrant society in Ontario.

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So I affirm the work of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, I look forward to it becoming a full degree-granting university and I look forward to the future, when the students and the faculty of Ryerson continue to put forth a vision that means that mind and application will build a better society for all people.

The Deputy Speaker: Any questions or comments? If not, any further debate?

Mr Elston: I have just a very few words to say. One of them has to do of course with the influence of Ryerson on the people in my area. Ryerson has been known for some time as a great place for radio and television journalism schools. They have graduated several people who have become very well known in the field of broadcast journalism. They have sent a number of their students to the area from which I hail, which is Wingham, Ontario—I'm now living in Walkerton—and they have for a long time attracted a number of the students from our area to go there to complete post-secondary education courses of one sort or another.

I'm a person who believes in the continuing education role in establishing our young people as highly competitive individuals in the very difficult marketplace they find themselves in these days. I think we should be doing all that we can to supplement and provide a wide choice of fields into which these young people can graduate after completing secondary school.

It's of interest to me, however, at the time when we are changing Ryerson Polytechnical Institute into Ryerson Polytechnic University, that at the same time we are also taking away institutions of higher learning from the people of this province. My friend the member for Timiskaming and myself have suffered the recent loss of two colleges of agricultural learning, both the New Liskeard facility and Centralia from the county of Huron, which is an area I hail from, and about which we were quite proud of having that institution in our area. Both those places are gone.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): That is stretching your geography a bit, isn't it, Murray?

Mr Elston: The member for Oxford doesn't think that somebody from Bruce county should be associated in any way with some place from Centralia. I'll tell you, in case you don't understand the geography, there are no institutions of higher learning after secondary institutions in my part of the province. There are none. You guys, you New Democrats, all you people who speak about being enamoured with providing post-secondary education, have the gall and the nerve to remove the one post-secondary educational institution in Huron county.

The people from Bruce county have gone there and have prospered because they went there. They have gone there and graduated from courses that have

provided real people with real education to do real jobs. The member for Oxford laughs about saying that I'm stretching the geography to say that I hail from the same part of the province in which Centralia is located.

Well, I will tell you that more and more what is happening with this administration is that you are drawing away from providing the public services that the people of this province have come to expect should be provided. No colleges in New Liskeard, no colleges in Centralia; no opportunities for the 171 people who are students at Centralia. Now we hear that you're going to be pulling away the support for residents and interns so they cannot go into the rural parts of our province and actually provide medical treatment for people.

The Deputy Speaker: The debate is on Ryerson Institute.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The debate is on the act on Ryerson Institute. Please stick to that.

Mr Elston: Listen, something is very interesting, and that is this: Here we are dealing with a bill, and I'm contrasting this particular bill, which is providing a university status to a post-secondary education institution, at the same time as this particular government is stealing from the people of this province the right to go to post-secondary education institutions in Centralia and in New Liskeard. They are, at the same time, taking away from the people of this province the ability to provide themselves with medical care by cutting away at the very institutions which are providing them with social support services.

If that doesn't talk to the needs of this bill and the needs of these people, if that isn't within the mandate of this particular House to allow me to speak on, then shut me up and ship me home, because I'll have no part of making this place a place of silence, a place where people cannot come up to complain about the types of terrible things that are happening to this province of mine.

I am proud to stand and say good things about Ryerson. I am not proud to have this government letting on that it stands for principles with which this bill would associate it when it is doing exactly the opposite in other places. There are young people all over the province who would like to get into these institutions of higher learning, and there are not enough places for them to go.

I suspect that in the short term Ryerson Polytechnic will have all kinds of active considerants looking to get into their classrooms. I suspect they will not be able to take all of the people who apply. I know they can't take all of the people who apply to some of their courses now. I know it full well. I know some of the students who are going there now.

If that is the case, then why can I not speak about the

problem being associated with students trying to find placement in other locations, like New Liskeard, like Centralia? Where do they go when the doors are shut? Where do they go when the lands that they have occupied as an institution of higher learning are pulled from underneath them and sold off to do something with the budget of this particular Finance minister?

There is a bit of a crisis in this province, and the crisis is all around how we prepare our young people for moving into a new era of competitiveness, as everybody likes to speak about, of difficulty finding jobs of any shape or description, of difficulty remaining prepared to face up against the new problems in the international marketplace. That's why Ryerson is so important. It is one of those institutions where people can go, where they can seek some counselling as to how to learn, how to grasp, how to continue to learn the skills that need to be used if this country of ours is to prosper in any shape or description.

Who knows? Maybe after a while, when the current administration is finished taking away all of the professional freedoms of the medical practitioners or others who are going to be chopped and hacked in the Health ministry's new constraint program, maybe it will go to Ryerson and ask Ryerson to start developing a new degree program to help to recover the medical problems which are being put loose among us these days.

This is a rant that I am on—it cannot be described as anything other than that—but I will tell you that I have come to discover more than ever that unless we are prepared to stand up and hold our place, the people who are now administering this province, the New Democratic Party of Ontario, are prepared to take away all of the things that the combined population of this province have brought together to provide us with the great sense of security we now share.

Take a look at it: They are hacking away at our educational institutions, not just post-secondary education, but also elementary and secondary education fields. They are taking away from the medical system. They are taking away from the health care system. They are chopping away at seniors who have for so many years earned a certain livelihood and who have contributed to the development of the foundations of our social programs.

Mr Sutherland: I don't want to hear one comment about the deficit from one of your members, not one comment.

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The Deputy Speaker: The member for Oxford, you will have ample time afterwards if you have any questions or any comments. In the meantime, I would ask you to reserve your comments. The member for Bruce.

Mr Elston: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I

didn't really intend to be too long, but some people may get me going much longer than I wanted to.

It seems to me that while we celebrate the Ryerson breakthrough—degree-granting status, university status for Ryerson—we must confront ourselves with the bleak prospects of several hundreds of students who will no longer find post-secondary education placements. That's what is so stark in the reality that is provided to the Ontario of today. While we celebrate the university, we mourn the loss of Centralia College of Agricultural Technology, we mourn the loss of New Liskeard College of Agricultural Technology, we mourn the loss of the skills which the young people who were at Centralia and New Liskeard would have shared with the society in Ontario.

At the same time, we celebrate the skills that are going to be brought to this province of ours, indeed the entire country and in fact even internationally, because I know some of Ryerson's graduates have gone on to other countries as well. We celebrate those people and we celebrate the fact that those people will be able to stay in a way associated with a living, evolving and an educating facility.

But the alumni of Centralia, after next May, will no longer be associated with a living faculty of education; they will be associated with history only. Even the member for Huron, who is a graduate from Centralia, will no longer have a living alma mater to which you can resort when you have questions concerning certain, let's say, farm problems which may confront him. He's a farmer; he went to Centralia. From time to time, people do resort to calling their former mentors, their teachers, to figure out exactly what they can do to lift the burden of the problem. But Centralia ceases; thank God, Ryerson will continue.

But what does it say about the world we now see ourselves in when we can celebrate, under Bill 1, the new university and yet hardly a word is said—hardly a word at all has been said by the government party about the death of Centralia and New Liskeard, about the loss of several hundred placements for post-secondary education learning, for continuing education, for assisting the marketplace in research, for assisting the farm people in discovering what it is that has caused problems with their flocks of chickens or turkeys?

I want only to tell the people that the folks governing this province now are very, very quickly making sure that this province doesn't have the types of educational facilities we need to make sure we have the broadest possible skills we will all need into the next century.

I can gladly say that Ryerson university will be probably a very good place to attend. I know students there now who not only enjoy it because at least social parts of growing up are accommodated at Ryerson, just like at other universities, but they will prosper from it. I'm sure they will do quite well by it, but I want to

make sure that people likewise know there are several other areas in which those prospects will not be offered to individuals.

One more thing I want to say about Ryerson; it's a very practical thing: Ryerson is located in downtown Toronto. I have been there on a couple of occasions. I actually help to bring students from my area to Ryerson on occasion when my schedule accommodates their schedule. I drop them off there. To my concern on some of those dark November nights—when I drop some people off at residences I take them right to the door. I am concerned, from time to time, about possible problems of security, sometimes with the lighting which is around there. The safety of the student, of course, for all of us, I think, is probably paramount. After that, you start considering how they're able to prosper with their lessons and otherwise.

I know that the people have always been concerned with that as an issue, but whatever it takes on your first board of governors meeting, I would hope that the first resolution would be to confirm some steps even to increase the vigilance for the very young people who are coming to the downtown of Toronto, sometimes, for some of them, for the very first time, and to make sure that their safety is not only preserved but enhanced in ways which I know the people who are here would want to realize.

Educational facilities are in charge of our most precious resource. Elementary, secondary and post-secondary education guide and mould. They provide skills for those young people. They have them in their formative years, at times when our attitudes are beginning to become moulded, and the charge which they have is an onerous one. And while I congratulate you on receiving university status, I'm not sure that will help Ryerson one little bit, because I know that it has provided good, sound guidance to those young people in years past and it is now an expectation that you will continue to do the same thing.

There's a charge which I think the educators in this province have accepted generally very well in the past. It is one which, however, is sometimes increasingly difficult to bear because expectations have been sometimes unrightly placed on the—

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): You mean wrongly.

Mr Elston: Well, wrongly, sure. My friend the educator from Middlesex corrects me, and I thank her for that very much.

But in any event, the charge of our educational institutions guaranteeing success for people sometimes places expectations beyond reality on some of our educational facilities. That concerns me. It bothers me to a degree that sometimes people substitute the institutions' existence for the fact that they must work towards

getting themselves a good job, a good placement. They have to earn the skills, they have to learn the skills, and I'm just hoping that the Ryerson situation can be spun into something new and real for some of our secondary school graduates this coming year and the next years.

I can congratulate those who will be receiving this year degrees which will show on them "Ryerson Polytechnic University" for the first time. I guess those will be extremely historic pieces of parchment. I congratulate all who have successfully completed their schooling there and remind them that unlike New Liskeard and Centralia, which will cease to operate a year hence, Ryerson, like its brief but very heady and successful past, will have an extremely important and successful future for this province and indeed for the country.

The Deputy Speaker: Any questions or comments? The member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: I think some of the comments were rather salient and to the point from the member for Bruce. His points were well taken with respect to what this arbitrary closing and opening process is that's taking place from this government.

The other interesting point of view: This is one of the few education bills that have come before this House, and I'm not trying to play down this particular bill, but it's not exactly, in my opinion, earth-shattering. In the comments I would ask for from the member for Bruce—I mean, this basically changes the name of one of our institutes of higher learning and that's basically it. With all the concern out there, with all the education forums that are taking place, with all the problems that are being outlined by the constituencies that we all represent, I didn't hear too many people saying, "What you need to do is change Ryerson Polytechnical Institute to a university." In fact, nobody came to me, other than a few people who were involved in the school itself.

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Let's be perfectly clear: This is not a burning issue. This is not an issue, as an education bill, that is going to resolve a whole pile of problems with respect to class sizes, with respect to the number of people enrolling in secondary education, with respect to a whole series of things. It may change the hierarchy and workings of Ryerson. It may give us more money or costs with respect to the hierarchy. It may give professors a better remuneration or tenure or I'm not certain what. It may do a lot of things, but it's not going to put one more student in any classroom anywhere. It's not going to do that. I think that's what people are talking to me about when it comes to post-secondary education reform. They're not talking to me about renaming Ryerson Polytechnical Institute to Ryerson university.

I would ask maybe one of the government members to come forward and say what makes this such a

burning issue that we have to deal one, two, three through this House to get it on the table, as if we're resolving some crisis out there. What crisis? I didn't know this crisis existed.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): In the brief moments that I have to respond, I'd like to pick up on the issue of a burning issue. You know, there are some things that traditionally aren't very controversial in this place. The way I understand it is that you bring house-keeping matters to this place and you move them through and generally there's agreement between all three parties that this is generally the way it happens.

But this isn't just housekeeping. This is a burning issue and it's a very important issue to the institution we're talking about, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, and to the students and the people who are going to be applying to get into that institution and essentially to the people who are there now. To those people, it is a rather pressing, important issue.

It's not a burning issue that's going to set the entire province of Ontario in flames. If my Conservative colleague here today is suggesting that this Legislature should only deal with issues that are of a burning nature to the entire province, I would like to say to him that before we set the province of Ontario afire with all of the burning issues that he would like to attend to, let's deal with a very important pressing issue for Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. That's what we're doing here today.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I'd certainly like to add my comments to those of my colleagues here today, especially—I must tell you, I ran down two floors from my office, because I was listening to the speech by my House leader, the member for Bruce, and was very pleased that he mentioned the closing of Centralia College and New Liskeard College.

I think it does relate to this bill in relation to what's going on here today, because here we are, spending a lot of good legislative time really spinning our wheels, talking about the renaming of an institution, a very well-respected institution. Meanwhile, we could be having a very constructive consultation and discussion as to why this government is closing other technical schools in this province when we know we need a training culture, need to make sure that our children right across Ontario have access to training. Without any consultation, the government arbitrarily closed these two colleges of training that are actually very scientific.

Both of these schools carry out research which is very, very important, Centralia for research that's concentrated on specific sectors of the agricultural industry and some, obviously, to field crops that are very particular to the Huron county area, such as white beans. New Liskeard of course is the northern outpost by the Ontario government for northern agriculture.

Here we are debating name changes and change of status of a very prestigious institution in Toronto, while at the same time closing two institutions that deserve to be preserved and invested in. In fact, we have invested in these institutions. We should carry them on and attract our children to those polytechs, if you will, in other parts of this province. That's probably what we should be doing here today: how we can get a whole network of polytechnicals in Ontario, and our ag colleges could be the first step towards that new network.

The Deputy Speaker: Further questions or comments?

Mr Bisson: I just wanted to take a couple of minutes to go through the member for Bruce's comments. I understand, like all members and people who live in his riding and also the people who live in the riding of the member for Timiskaming, how difficult the closure of a college would be. We don't need to underestimate what that means, and I think we on this side of the House, the government, fully realize what that means. We don't do this lightly, we don't do this with vindictiveness; we do it because of the situation we find ourselves in.

I think the member for Bruce recognizes—I have a lot of respect for him—that the province of Ontario, like other provinces across Canada and like all other jurisdictions in North America and in Europe, I would say, are going through very difficult times where governments have to make decisions about how best to spend taxpayers' dollars and where we can afford to spend those dollars.

The closure of those two institutes he talks about, one in southern Ontario and the one I'm more familiar with in the riding of Timiskaming, is a question of consolidating our educational facilities, when it comes to agriculture, into other facilities that are undersubscribed. We have a system of agricultural colleges across the province of Ontario which are not fully being utilized to capacity, and the government has to make some decisions along the way about how best to spend the taxpayers' dollars.

Are these simple, are these easy decisions? No. Do governments do this lightly? No. Governments do this with a lot of regret, but the reality is that we need to deal with the fiscal situation we find ourselves in.

I think we don't add anything to the public debate when we in government or we in opposition, or whatever position we might find ourselves in, try to come at this from the position of really trying to get the—I understand your frustration, it's something that's difficult, but we need to find in this province, like we need to find across the country, a way we can start dealing with some of these issues, because they're very difficult, very complicated issues. We need to find a way we can create public debate by which we can get

into these things and get into decisions that are for the betterment of the people of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Bruce, you have two minutes to reply.

Mr Elston: I don't want people to think it is not important. In terms of changing the status of Ryerson, changing the name or changing the status is not all that will occur there. There are some really important things that will happen to that institution.

But again I want to remind people that as difficult as the times may be, I find it unacceptable for a government, any government, to eliminate post-secondary education placements for our young people. If there is one resource in this country that we should be guarding—not even guarding, but nurturing through these difficult times, it's our young people. Our young people ought to be able to go to places to learn, to acquire skills, to receive training, and it is just such an error in judgement to be removing post-secondary education placements, no matter what your problems are economically.

I would say that you put your priorities straight. Health care, education—I'll go on record—are my areas of priority, and I would tell you that those places ought to receive a paramount amount of your attention.

That will mean that difficult decisions will have to be made through other parts of the budget, and I fully appreciate that. But where in the world can we say we are leading this province if we're taking away post-secondary education placements? Where are we leading this province if we are chopping away at the very basis of a health care system which was seen to be second to none?

I make that argument now, understanding full well that difficult decisions do have to be made in face of a very difficult economic situation, part of it added to by the New Democrats, built on the record of the Liberals and the Tories, but you shouldn't be closing those particular facilities while creating a new university.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, your time has expired. Any further debate?

Mr Stockwell: I'd like to address—

Mr Perruzza: Oh, no.

Mr Stockwell: Excuse me, the member for Downsview.

Interjection: He said, "Go to it."

Mr Stockwell: "Go." Okay, I will. There are a few issues I think we need to deal with when dealing with the education issue in this province.

I did pull out the legislation earlier, and I was reviewing it and commenting on how this is the first and only piece of legislation with respect to education that has been definitely through the Legislature in this session and I think as well last session.

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What I think we must remember, before we hear about this government talking about educational reform and so on and so forth and this piece of legislation before us, is there are some problems in the education system that I think it has itemized itself. They've struck a royal commission to last two years to review our education system in this province.

It's kind of interesting, and the cynical sorts out there would suggest that this royal commission is very, very curiously timed. It's timed to report right around the next election, so some cynics would suggest that this particular royal commission was struck simply to avoid any decision-making in the next year and a half or two years, thereby avoiding any responsibility for making decisions and ideally avoid any of the repercussions that come with decision-making. That seems to be a far more pressing and urgent issue that this government should deal with rather than the issue that's before us today.

There are those who suggest that there are some changes besides the name for this particular school of higher learning, and I'm quite certain there are. It just hasn't been enunciated quite clearly by the government members themselves why this becomes so pressing and urgent today when the issues that face municipalities and boards of education around this province are somewhat dumfounding, how this happens to be the most important and pressing and urgent issue that is on our legislative agenda today.

That does not just come from my own personal comments; it comes from comments that I've heard from people around this province, the comments about children or graduates of high school trying to gain access to all kinds of schools of higher learning, all the post-secondary schools. "Does this piece of legislation create one more space?" the question is always. No, it doesn't. "Does this create one more dollar towards education?" No, it doesn't. "Does this help in the cash crunch for students going to school as far as grants are concerned that this government took away?" No, it doesn't.

As I said before, I have my Agenda for People here, and in this document this government spoke about 60% funding for local boards of education as far as education is concerned. In the three years we've been here, we haven't seen a nickel more go to education. In fact, we've seen reductions go to education.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Do you want them to spend more?

Mr Stockwell: No, no, no more money was spent that way to increase the education dollars. The member for Mississauga West, who now has jumped into this fray, not exposed to one word of the comments other than the last three he just listened to, doesn't seem to understand what I was suggesting. What I was suggest-

ing was that what this government promised in the Agenda for People and what it's delivering today are two very different issues.

We as a party didn't promise 60% funding in education. We didn't in fact make that promise, and therefore we wouldn't have had to deliver on a 60% funding formula. This is the party—

Mr Perruzza: That's why you didn't get elected.

Mr Stockwell: I got elected. This is the party that made that promise, that sits here today and says: "The most important and pressing issue facing the educational system today is the renaming of Ryerson. That's one of the most important issues facing our education structure." The only piece of legislation that comes forward with respect to education in this province is the renaming of Ryerson. That appears to be priority one for this government on the educational side. Bill 1, priority one: renaming Ryerson.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): Not important enough. Is that what you're saying?

Mr Stockwell: Now there are some arguments to be made to effect this change. Mr Speaker, again—the member for Yorkview this time—it's confusing sometimes, but the member for Yorkview, I'm almost certain, is suggesting that it's not important. I'm not suggesting it's not important, but if I were ranking this particular piece of legislation on a priority scale with all the other impacts on education today, I would hardly suggest—

Mr Perruzza: Why don't you sit down so that we can get to the important ones?

Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, if they're going to ask the questions they should at least have the decency to hear the responses. I was only suggesting that this particular bill, Bill 1, is not exactly, from a priority point of view, the most important issue facing the province today.

I can talk about two schools that are closing today that the member for Bruce spoke about earlier. Those would be two very pressing and urgent concerns from constituents in those areas and surrounding areas and those in the farming educational field. Those are important issues. Those are concerns that people are talking about.

Making a final decision on junior kindergarten would be something that I think is an important issue. I know the members from the city of Mississauga would like to hear their response on that, because that school board itself isn't providing junior kindergarten.

I know there are students out there who are looking to get into universities across this province who think you could free up some spaces, which you made promises to do—that's an important issue.

Maybe the grants program, which you abolished—I might add, Mr Speaker, when you were running for this

job, you said we'd abolish the loan system. You said we wouldn't give out any loans any more, it would all be grants. What did you do? You did exactly the opposite. You abolished all the grant programs. My goodness.

These are the kinds of issues that the constituents in Etobicoke are asking me about. I'm not saying this bill isn't important, but I haven't had one person ask me about this piece of legislation. I haven't had a single constituent say to me, "Boy, the biggest problem facing the educational field today in the province of Ontario is Ryerson's name." That's not what they're saying to me.

If the commitment could be made that we would let this bill slide through, we would let this bill go forward, and then we'd get some real reform, some real commitment, some real legislation to deal with the educational malaise that we've fallen into, I would be the first to say, "Yes, do it, process this bill." But what's following this piece of educational legislation from an educational front? Nothing. Nothing is following it.

All that's following it is a \$3-million royal commission headed up by the biggest NDPer in this province, Gerry Caplan, to report back just before the next election so you can guarantee yourself you don't have to make any decisions on education for the next two years. That's what's following this piece of legislation.

So what do we have?

Mr Bisson: If you listen to Canada AM, you will find out.

Mr Stockwell: I've got the member from south Cochrane heckling again.

Mr Bisson: Talk about—

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr Stockwell: Here he goes again. I'm doing my best, but the member for Cochrane South continues to heckle. There must be a cattle prod behind him that wakes him up.

When the issues that my constituents ask me about, that need to be addressed, are issues like universal testing—

Mr Mammoliti: You said this before. You're repetitive.

Mr Stockwell: I didn't say that, and you're going to hear it, Mr Yorkview.

They're talking about destreaming. They're talking about the social contract and the costs on education by this social contract. They're talking to me about Metropolitan Toronto school boards and the no grants they get from this government. If the social contract is in fact adopted and they're going to cut unconditional grants, the Metropolitan Toronto school boards, which don't get any money, have to send a cheque to the province of Ontario to cross-subsidize it. Those are the questions they're talking about.

Mr Mammoliti: That's it. I'm leaving.

Mr Stockwell: I've finally succeeded. The member for Yorkview is going to leave. Thank goodness I finally succeeded.

There are a wide-ranging and broad number of issues that need to be addressed in this province with respect to education. I don't mean to demean a piece of legislation changing the name of Ryerson, but this piece of legislation is not pressing or urgent. It's not what my constituents are asking me about.

It doesn't deal with the closing of post-secondary schools in both Huron and New Liskeard. It doesn't deal with the issue of junior kindergarten. It doesn't deal with the issue of universal testing. It doesn't deal with destreaming. It doesn't deal with the spiralling cost of education. It doesn't deal with any of those.

As I am cynical, so are the constituents of this province. Please don't pass this off as education reform. Don't pass this off as something that needs to be done today. If you're really serious, you wouldn't have struck a royal commission at \$3 million to begin a process that will ensure one thing and one thing only: that we will not see a tangible or meaningful piece of legislation in this House on education reform until the next election.

But there are many people out there who are saying, "Maybe it's a good thing that we don't see any education reform legislation," because if it meant this government bringing reform forward, they'd rather not see any reform at all.

1700

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Downsview.

Mr Perruzza: You know, you just can't resist. He took—what was it—13 or 14 minutes to say absolutely nothing on something that he says is not very important at all. This could have been done without taking up any of this assembly's time.

He talks about important issues. I recall a time when his leader, Mike Harris, the PC leader in this place, sat for days on end and read out every name of every river and every waterfall in the province of Ontario. He stood there and he read out "Crickle Creek Lake" and "PC Waterfalls." He read them all and for days on end that was an important and pressing issue.

We're talking about one of the finest institutions in the province of Ontario and we're talking about an issue that is of paramount importance to it, and he takes this opportunity to just simply lambaste the government on every other issue except the issue that we're talking about.

He knows very well why the royal commission on education was set up. He knows that every other study that's been conducted in this place has never dealt with the fundamental issue in education today, quite frankly an issue that was created by our Conservative friends.

I don't even blame the Liberals on this one, the fact that there are so many school boards and so many administrative structures in the province of Ontario that relate and deal directly with education. One of the principal mandates of the royal commission is to review precisely that: why our education system is so convoluted, why it's so top-heavy, why it's so expensive.

You know what his solution is? Crank up provincial funding to 60%. Spend more money on education. Let's spend far more money on education. That was his solution because that's somehow going to take it off the property tax. He's absolutely and totally off base on that one.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Mississauga West.

Mr Mahoney: There seems to be an underlying message, and it's interesting when government members opposite get excited when the member for Etobicoke centre—

Interjection: West.

Mr Mahoney: —stands up and puts forward his concerns about the fact that we should be, in his view, dealing with issues of more significance.

I would frankly agree and disagree in the same sentence, because yes, we should deal with important issues, but this also is an important issue to many of the people who attend Ryerson—not just to the board of directors, not just to the president, but to the kids who actually attend Ryerson, because this is really who will benefit from it gaining this status, I would suggest to the members. It's important from that perspective.

But the thing that's lost in all of this, that members opposite seem to ignore, is the serious damage that this government truly has done to post-secondary education. Just take a look at OSAP. I personally have two of my three kids currently in university, one just graduating from Western, another in second year at McMaster and a third boy still in high school.

The difficulty of gaining entrance to these universities is becoming much increased in this province. What are we saying to our young people? We're saying to many of them that we're going to increase the requirements to get them into school, we're going to make it more difficult for them to get money to go to school, and we're turning our university system into one of élite students who can pass very stringent requirements to gain entrance and who are fortunate enough to have families that are able to afford to send them there.

That's clearly the wrong message. I would think that the board of directors at Ryerson would share our concern that we turn that message around and make post-secondary education at their new university and all universities more accessible to the young people in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Cochrane South.

Mr Bisson: I cannot resist but to speak after the member for Etobicoke West—east, centre, north. He's all over the place. What riding does he come from?

I want to just say one thing: The member stands and pontificates in this House, probably to the ultimate in this House. I just want to remind people for the record, because the member was very careful in how he chose to speak on this particular bill—first of all, I want to agree with the members opposite, the Liberals and the government, in regard to the question of this bill being a very important one, not only for the institute of Ryerson but for the students and people who are attending or will be attending that facility either now or in the future.

The other thing in regard to legislation that the House is dealing with in regard to education, the member for Etobicoke West, centre or east, wherever he comes from—because, again, I don't know where he comes from half the time—is a little bit misleading in his assertions to this House that the government is not dealing with educational questions.

I would first of all remind the member that the government is going through the process of passing an education omnibus bill that is very far-reaching in regard to education at the secondary and the primary level; more importantly, to the secondary level—that the member hasn't forgotten, there happens to be the most major reform of post-secondary education that's going on right now through the Ontario training advisory board by which, for the first time in the province of Ontario, for the first time across the country, employers and workers will play a very great role in determining the training needs of their workplace and the training needs they need as individuals within the province, rather than leaving it to people within the Ministry of Education or the former Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

We're putting that directly in the hands of people who most know what needs to be done about education; namely, the employers who utilize that education and the employees themselves who are going to need it in order to work in the workplaces of the future.

I accept the member's political speech that he gave over here. I thought he was at his nomination meeting, but other than that I think the member should be a little bit—come clean when it comes to the question of education in the province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Etobicoke West has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Stockwell: Firstly, with respect to the Ryerson—I mean, there are some benefits to that. I said that in my speech. Yes, there are some benefits to the name

change, the adjustments in students and so on.

Mr Perruzza: They are not going to be out talking.

Mr Stockwell: The member for Downsview continues to act—I listened carefully and hung on every syllable and they're all one-syllable words I noted, every one-syllable word you—just listen up for a minute.

Yes, there are some changes that are necessary. I understand that. If there were some legitimate pieces of legislation following this, I suggested, then I could see processing it through the House because there is some substantive debate on education reform. Clearly that point was lost on the member opposite. I understand why it was lost. I will send a copy of Instant Hansard in the next hour and maybe he'll catch up on it.

To the member from Mississauga West, again, I would suggest, yes, there are some benefits to changing the name and I am not opposed to that. It's going to help some students who are there now, maybe some who have graduated and those who are thinking of entering post-secondary education. But again, the point must be made that this is the most substantive piece of education reform, education legislation, this House has dealt with in a long time. We haven't seen any education reform.

I hearken back to the 60% funding and, as the member for Downsview is suggesting, I was supporting that. You know, these people can't even remember their promises. He started accusing me of writing the Agenda for People, for heaven's sake. You made the promise, not me. You're supposed to keep your promises. We didn't promise 60% funding. My goodness, at least they can remember what they promised.

The ex-member from Cochrane South—

Mr Perruzza: Are you sure you didn't promise 60% funding? Are you absolutely sure?

Mr Stockwell: Sure, I didn't promise 60% funding. The member for Downsview is grunting inaudibly again. The ex-member from Cochrane South who has directional problems—well, it's the member for Etobicoke West. When the next member comes in from Cochrane South, I'll be happy to explain the education problems. It'll be a lot easier because he'll be sitting much closer to me.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

[Applause]

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Is that applause for the fact that I'm over here now? I guess those who have been following this debate wonder what it really is that we're talking about as we debate Bill 1. For those who care to follow along, perhaps I'll just, in summary form, point out what the effect of this bill does.

I address my remarks through you, sir, to the member

for Etobicoke—

Mr Stockwell: Centre.

Mr Sorbara: —Centre, who suggests that this bill simply changes the name of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute to Ryerson Polytechnic University. Of course, that's not the case. This is actually, in the history of the development of Ryerson, as everyone calls it, a fairly important piece of legislation.

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I want to put my position on the record right away, and I want to tell you that I support this bill, I'm going to vote for this bill and I'm going to urge other members in the Legislature to support it and to vote for it. It is not a bill that simply changes the name of an institution and gives it a classy university name; it actually is going to change, I think rather significantly, the kind of institution that Ryerson will be in the future, although the comments that some of my colleagues made about the ignoring of all of the other educational problems in the province I think are worthy of some note.

But we have an opportunity here in debating and passing this legislation to assist, in the small way in which we do as legislators, in the development of what I think is a very important educational institution in the province of Ontario.

Yes, Ryerson's going to get a new name. I think people will ignore that and continue to call it "Ryerson" and continue to give it the respect that it deserves, but what does this bill do? I think that's the basic question that we should be debating here, and if you're in favour of what this bill does, then of course you will support it; if you're not in favour of what this bill does, you won't support it. What it does is change the status of an institution that has always had a unique status in the province of Ontario and gives it full parity with all the other universities that we have in the province, and there are some 16 of them.

So in part, this bill is about money. This bill will change, believe it or not, the granting formula that determines how much money a university or a post-secondary educational institution gets, and it will allow Ryerson to participate in that funding on the same basis as the other universities in the province. Frankly, I think that's a good idea, because the work it does and the kind of teaching it does and the kind of research it does argue for the fact that it should have that so-called parity or equality of funding, so in that respect, we are doing a good thing here when we support this bill.

Secondly, what this bill does is that it allows Ryerson, in the fullness of time, as these programs are developed, to grant not only undergraduate degrees—a power it's had for quite some time—but to grant graduate degrees as well in the 30 or 40 programs it offers. That doesn't mean that as of next year Ryerson will be granting graduate degrees in all of these pro-

grams, but it, if I might use the phrase, opens the door to creating post-graduate degrees in a number of programs. Whether they be in telecommunications, computer technologies, nursing and a whole host of other disciplines, it allows this new university to begin to develop graduate programs in these areas. I think that's a good thing and I think we should be supporting that enthusiastically and wholeheartedly, so that's the second point.

The first point is parity of funding; the second point is the ability to now begin to develop graduate programs and ultimately grant graduate degrees.

The third thing that this bill creating this new university will do is to allow it to participate more aggressively in research, both primary and applied research, in the disciplines that Ryerson is known for. That as well is important. There is a vicious competition, I should tell you, among universities throughout Canada for the scarce research dollars that fund the kind of research and development that our university system is known for and needs to continue to be known for.

Because Ryerson has never quite been a university, it's been at a disadvantage—not that it doesn't do research—in applying for and securing funding to do a variety of research projects and undertakings, and now, once we pass this bill, Ryerson will compete on a level playing field with all of the other universities in Canada and indeed around the world for that funding. That funding is scarcer and scarcer, and I think Ryerson ought to be able to compete for it like the other universities in Canada.

This bill takes me back, sir, I should tell you, to the period from 1985 to 1987, when I had the honour and the privilege to serve this province as its Minister of Colleges and Universities. At that time, the president of Ryerson was Brian Segal. He's now the—now, I'm not going to get his title right. He is now the publisher of Maclean's magazine, working for the Maclean Hunter organization. He didn't go directly from Ryerson to Maclean's. He went for a time to Guelph as president of the University of Guelph.

I remember, I think it was my first meeting with Dr Segal, we were talking, as I recall, about the funding of the Rogers communication centre, which is now a reality, and I'll be saying a few words about that as well. He just brought up the subject very briefly. He said, "Minister, I want to"—I said, "Don't call me 'Minister.'" He said: "Minister, I want to talk to you at some time in the near future about our interest in amending the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act to change our status to that of a university; not that we are thoroughly uncomfortable with our unique status, but we think there are very important things that will happen at Ryerson as a result of that change. But we're only at the preliminary stage of investigating the affect of the change right now, and I hope some day down the

road to talk to you about it."

I see in the gallery the current president of Ryerson, Dr Terry Grier, who has brought this project to completion, at least from the perspective of Ryerson and the internal work that had to go on there. He's done a very good job of working with officials within the Ministry of Colleges and Universities; now I guess we call it the Ministry of All Education, or Education and Training, or something like that, and we're here now debating the bill. So I guess one could say that it's been a little while coming. But the way things go in this province, I'm not surprised that it's taken from, I guess, 1985 to 1993 to complete the project.

I just want to say a couple of words about the history of Ryerson because I think it's important to understand the history of the institution to fully appreciate this completion of its development as a post-secondary institution in the province of Ontario. I'm relying here on some notes that I just quickly acquired from the library, from The Canadian Encyclopedia.

Ryerson was founded just after the war in September of 1948. It was founded, really, as a trade school. It was thought, I think appropriately at the time, that Canada's postwar industrial future required us to have an institution that would appropriately train young men and women in Ontario—because it was to serve all of Ontario although its first students came from the Toronto area—but really a trade school for young men and women to prepare them for the industrial age that Canada was about to enter into after the Second World War. It didn't stay that way for very long. In fact, this Legislature has amended the Ryerson act I guess three or four times. The last time was in 1977.

But the Ryerson of today was really created by an act of the Legislature in 1963 which created really an independent institution. Prior to that, it had some rather direct relationship with, at that time, the Ministry of Education, and after that, in 1963, became an autonomous institution, with its own board of governors and its own budget.

1720

I guess the other important event was the power that Ryerson was given in 1971 to grant degrees and diplomas, so to those who say that the change simply gives Ryerson the opportunity to grant degrees where before it granted diplomas, that's simply out of date. Ryerson began granting degrees and does grant bachelor degrees in a variety of fields and has done so since 1971.

The thing that really fascinates me about Ryerson is that it is all tied up with the very beginnings of education in the province of Ontario, although it wasn't created until just after the war. In fact, it bears the name of the person who really gave Ontario the education system that we have today, Egerton Ryerson, who was quite a character and quite an important character in the

history of Ontario, dating back to pre-Confederation days and going, I guess, back to when Dr Ryerson was made president of the Methodist Church of—we always get interesting notes from the whip in this place; I won't read this one out.

In any event, Dr Ryerson was, among other things, a president of the Methodist Church of Canada. But what most of us remember him for is the fact that he was one of the true crusaders in education in the province of Ontario and gave to us the system of compulsory education and universal education in the province of Ontario. Compulsory: We all have to go to school until we're 16. Some of us think that should be changed to 18 but that's another debate. Secondly, universal education: That is a system whereby the province of Ontario was required, is required to provide education for every young person in the province.

So Ryerson kind of carries the history of Dr Ryerson. If Dr Ryerson were here today and saw what was happening to the institution that bears his name, I think probably he would be pleased and he would be saying the Legislature is doing a good thing.

But there's one other aspect of this bill and this development and this graduation of Ryerson that I wanted to mention and that is the program work that it does today and the program work that it's going to be doing in the future.

Many of us spent a lot of time rambling on or expressing views on where we should be going in education in the province of Ontario. It's trite now to say that our whole future is tied up in our ability to educate ourselves. But I've always thought that somehow Ryerson had the unique ability to kind of know where we are going as a society and had sort of a wonderful insight into the kinds of skills that we need as a society and was always among the first institutions to develop programs to educate and train people to fill those jobs.

I remember as a kid, 15 years old or 16 years old, I was just completing high school and I was very interested in radio broadcasting and I went down to Ryerson to look at its program. I guess it was the only institution in the province at that time that did any trainer education in broadcasting. I was absolutely fascinated by it and, unfortunately, I decided to choose another career. But just think of all the people who have come through Ryerson, trained in broadcasting and now working as journalists not just in Ontario but really around the world.

The list goes on. Whether it's applied sciences, computer technologies or whatever, Ryerson seems to have a sense of where we need to be going, and I think it does a really good job in that regard.

I wanted to say a word about the broadcast centre, because one of the other things that Dr Segal came to

talk to me about, shortly after I became minister, was provincial funding to help build the broadcast centre. Fortunately, at that time this province was in a very different economic situation than it is in today, and there were resources enough to begin a rebuilding process, new buildings for a number of our institutions. One of the ones I was most attracted to was the new broadcast centre that Dr Segal at that time was proposing for Ryerson.

I must say I regret a little bit that I've not yet had an opportunity to be inside the building. I guess I wish somebody had sent me a little notice that there was going to be an official opening, but ministers come and go and things have to go on. I don't know what minister was actually there when it was finished, but all the reports that I get are that this facility really is one of the best in North America for all of the things that it does, including training in journalism and broadcasting, and I'm glad that we did it.

We did a number of other things at that time not directly related to Ryerson; more directly related to building of facilities all around the province. I remember we started a new building at Queen's University. We started a new building—

Mr Mahoney: It's not working.

Mr Sorbara: No, it's not going to work. Sorry, I say to my whip, it's not going to work.

I guess the one thing that saddens me about the fact that it's taken so long to debate this bill is we are in a totally different economic set of circumstances today than we were back at that time and, unfortunately, I think a number of the things that the New Democratic Party of Ontario is doing during this brief time that it's going to be in government is allowing—I was going to say irreversible; I hope it's not irreversible—a significant deterioration in the quality of our post-secondary institutions. This bill, although it's important for Ryerson, is going to do nothing to turn that around.

The amount of funding that we are providing for our educational institutions is being reduced and squeezed with every new budget of this government. My friend from Etobicoke centre pointed out the conversion of the student assistance program to an all-loan program, making it, for many students in the province of Ontario, a financial impossibility to go to school, whether at a community college or one of Ontario's universities.

We are reducing systematically the level of funding that we're providing for research, whether primary research or applied research, in every one of our institutions. If you talk to anyone associated with a university today, whether a student, someone who works on the support staff, a university professor, a university administrator, they will tell you in no uncertain terms that things have never been worse. I want to repeat that: They say that things have never been worse.

They reflect on the bad old Tory days when, for some reason or other, Bill Davis, although a former Education minister and thereafter Premier, lost interest in the funding of universities and community colleges. I do think they speak well of the period while we were in government, if I might blow our own horn for a while. I don't think that was particularly surprising. The province was in a buoyant financial situation. We believed that education was important and we put the taxpayers' money where our beliefs were.

But now, when you talk to people in our post-secondary system, whether in community colleges or in places like Centralia, mentioned by my friend the member for Bruce, and in particular in the university system, they say that under the administration of the New Democratic Party of Ontario, things have never been worse.

Students are finding that the programs they need are no longer available. They are finding that class sizes get larger and larger. They are finding that because of constraints, their access to professors and their access to library books and their access to research materials is being cut and squeezed and dwindled with every semester.

I think it's important to note, sir, during this debate at the culmination of the development of Ryerson, that we remind ourselves that, with all of our rhetoric about how important education is and how important it is that we train the people of this province and we educate the people of this province to really take on the challenges of a highly technological and global economy, what's really happening, university by university, community college by community college, institution by institution, is that things are getting worse and worse. And Bob Rae with his social contract and Bob Rae with all the rhetoric about, "Well, we've got to find some way to deal with the deficit," knows full well that if there's one place where we ought to be very, very careful about our cuts, it is in the post-secondary education system.

1730

Dr Grier's going to be delighted when, in a few minutes or a few hours of debate, we're going to pass this bill. But if Dr Grier were called upon to testify before this Parliament about the state of post-secondary education in Ontario in 1993, he would say that we have not lived up to the expectations of Dr Egerton Ryerson about the challenges that we face in educating ourselves.

Now, how are we going to turn that around? We can't just turn that around by opening the floodgates of funding again, because we do have serious funding constraints in every program of government and in every activity in this province that government funds.

But what is incredible about this long, extenuated discussion about social contract is that you hear nothing from the Premier and you hear nothing from his ministers and you hear nothing from the government about

what we're going to do to create new economic growth in this province, because it's only with a flourishing economy, I say to you, sir, that we're going to create the resources, we're going to generate the wealth to educate ourselves so that we can continue to grow and to flourish.

This bill, which creates a new university in Ontario and enhances the stature of Ryerson, is not going to do anything about the serious economic circumstances that we find ourselves in. And Bob Rae's social contract, which is really a code word for cutting salaries and laying people off, is not going to do anything about the economic circumstances that we find ourselves in in this province.

This bill, important as it is, is not going to give any encouragement to the young people of this province who are graduating from Ryerson and from Lakehead and from York and from the 16 universities and the 22 community colleges—I'm sorry, 23, now, community colleges—who knock on the doors of the businesses of this province looking for an opportunity to begin to apply the skills that they've acquired and they find signs that say "No help wanted."

So we'll pass this bill, and Ryerson will grow and flourish with its new status. But as we do so, let us remember that Ryerson and all of its sister institutions are not going to be able to grow and flourish until this government or its successor finds ways to create new, vibrant economic growth in Ontario that allows us, and provides us with the funds, to give our children and our students and indeed the entire province the kind of education that they need.

So, sir, I simply say to you and to the students of Ryerson, to its faculty, to its support staff, to its board of governors and to its president that I'm glad to be here in this Parliament to speak on this bill and I wish all of you great success. I simply want to say to you that as Ontario's newest university, we expect great things from you, both in the classroom and in the research laboratories that come under your umbrella, and I'm glad to be able to lend my support to this bill.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mr Dave Johnson (Don Mills): The member for York Centre has made some comments with regard to Ryerson and the history of Ryerson, and I find them particularly appropriate knowing that Ryerson was formed in 1948 and since 1971 has issued degrees in many different areas, including applied arts, engineering, social work and many other degrees.

Certainly, I'm going to support this bill and recognize that the benefits pertain to a number of areas, including enlarging the mandate for applied research, including graduate studies, as well as parity in funding with the universities.

I might say that it's been brought to my attention that

this is a movement that's happening not only here in Canada but across the world in that polytechnics are being converted into universities, universities of technology. This is happening in Britain. It's happening in Australia. There is a worldwide acknowledgement of the importance of the polytechnical institutes in our modern world in graduating students who are equipped for the regular world.

It's also interesting to note that there are 12,000 full-time students and 43,000 continuing education students at Ryerson. This is the largest number of continuing education students of any community college or institute.

I will say, though, that the comments of my colleague the member for Etobicoke West are very appropriate with regard to the \$3-million commission. Getting on to that topic, the \$3-million commission, that's a great waste to the taxpayers of this province, with regard to the necessity for testing which the people of this province are demanding and with regard to the cost of education, and there should be more movement in that direction. I also say that I hope that they get on with the job of improving Centennial College in East York to bring it up to the proper standards.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? If not, the honourable member for York Centre has two minutes to make a response.

Mr Sorbara: It's nice to be able to have just a couple more minutes. Look, we all agree that what the government has done in creating its so-called learning commission is an absolute abomination. I mean, the last thing we need in Ontario is an opportunity to study once again what we need to do, particularly under the chief bagman for the New Democratic Party, Gerry Caplan. I think there's universal agreement that it was just sort of one of the low points of this year in terms of government policy. I think we also agree that frankly, if the government—

Interjection.

Mr Sorbara: And, I say to my friend the member for Middlesex, Monique Bégin as well. I mean, she needs this job like she needs a hole in the head. It was a silly thing to do. It's a way to avoid the issues rather than to address them directly.

Let's be fair as well. Although the government will issue a press release and take credit for this bill creating Ryerson Polytechnic University, this has nothing to do with the New Democratic Party. This has nothing to do with the social contract. It has nothing to do with Bob Rae. It's a project that's been in the works for some seven or eight years now. It's been a long time coming. It's appropriate to do. We're going to pass the bill, I think, in very short order and it's going to be a good thing. If the government could just abandon the rest of its education agenda and get on with the real problems

facing our schools and our colleges and our universities in the way in which it's responded here, we'd all be in much better shape.

I support it and I think everyone in the House supports it. Frankly, it's the first thing of this session that the government has presented that is worthy of our support.

The Acting Speaker: Further debate?

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I've been otherwise occupied this afternoon and I understand from my friend the member for Bruce that an arrangement has been made. I don't know who has carriage of the bill, but I don't want anyone to have a cardiac arrest because I have arisen at 20 of 6, because I don't intend to be particularly long-winded on this subject.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): That'll be different.

Mr Conway: The member for Grey says, "That will be different," and unfortunately he's quite accurate. I will try to be restrained.

I'm glad to see Dr Grier and his colleagues from Ryerson with us this afternoon. I know it must be a very happy day for them. I'm very pleased to join with members on all sides in supporting Bill 1 and giving one of the province's and one of the country's most successful post-secondary educational institutions this further entitlement. I'm sure that in the very capable hands of the people who are gathered in the lower gallery this afternoon, all of our expectations for Ryerson Polytechnic University will be met in spades.
1740

I must say that having been in this assembly some time now, Ryerson has always enjoyed a particular place in the relationships it's had with governments of all kinds. In fact, I can remember coming here back in the mid-1970s, and it was always said by my old friend Bob Nixon that Ryerson's board was as close as it could get to a good Tory senate provincially and therefore it could be expected to do well in any of the claims it made with respect to Queen's Park.

I know that in my time in government, I always felt that there was a very good association between our government and Ryerson, and I'm very pleased, as I said, to support this particular bill that provides for the new opportunities at Ryerson.

I can tell you that constituents of mine throughout the constituency of North Renfrew have spoken to me as recently as just the other day. The mayor of Deep River, His Honour Lyall Smith, is a graduate of Ryerson, and he is a good example of the very outstanding individual and graduate that this institution has sent to not just my part of the province but across the country.

So I simply want to say that it's a happy day for Ryerson and I want to join in supporting colleagues in this particular endeavour.

Since this bill does give an opportunity to address

some of the questions in the post-secondary area, I want to take a very few moments to share some hopes and some concerns I've had in recent times about how well we're doing in terms of meeting the needs and the expectations of people across the province in this key area of post-secondary education.

I'm sure it's been said earlier this afternoon in this debate, but the Ryerson tradition of offering education that meets the needs not just of the academic interest but also the technical interest—I heard my friend the member for York Centre talking about his experience with the broadcasting program. I know one of my brothers graduated from the radio and television arts program at Ryerson some years ago. It seems to me that Ryerson has set a very good standard, a very high standard in many of these programs and in its relationship with the community, whether it was the business community, the labour community or so many others elsewhere.

I don't want to be too provocative, but when I reflect upon my time in this place and when I think about some of the experiences that I have had in even recent months, I'm saddened, quite frankly, and surprised to say this, but I've met some of the most conservative attitudes, some of the most profoundly conservative attitudes anywhere in the province and in the country in the university world.

I sat a few months ago at the pre-budget hearings that were initiated by the government through the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. I heard a great number of people, individuals and groups, come before the committee to make representations to the government, to the Legislature, as to what should be done in terms of planning for the new reality in Ontario that we've all come to experience. There were some very interesting, innovative ideas, but I was just in a rage when certain people from the university community came. I'll be very specific: OCUFA, the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, the university professors association. Essentially, they made a presentation to that committee that had not changed in 20 years, and the script was essentially this: "We're underfunded. Send more money and raise taxes." End of discussion.

I was just livid, because there are a lot of very bright people involved in that organization, and I'd just spent the weekend with all kinds of people who are unemployed or underemployed, and they expect from the academic leadership, as they expect from the political leadership, a greater creativity and a greater sensitivity than they got that day.

I've got a bit of a conflict of interest because I've got a number of friends who are professors, who teach in the Ontario universities.

Mr Perruzza: Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy.

Mr Conway: The member says, "Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy." That's putting it mildly. There are a lot of very good people and there are a lot of great programs, but there is a very, very considerable conservatism, rigidity:

"I'm all right, doc. Don't talk to me about a new program that might meet a particular need in the community."

"I'm in the university world; I don't talk to the colleges."

"I'm in the college world; I don't talk to the high schools."

"I'm in the academic stream in the high schools; I don't have to talk to the senior people in the public schools."

"I'm a professor; I don't really have to go to the labour council and really listen to what it's telling us about trades and technology programs."

As I say, I think Ryerson has set a very good example to the province and the country in many of these key areas where we know as a community we have got problems. I look at the Ryerson story and say, why has it been so limited? I looked at the co-op program at the University of Waterloo and I said to myself, why was that so limited to that one institution? Happily, we are seeing now more uptake of those kinds of programs.

I simply say, through this debate today, to the post-secondary world, you've done many very interesting, creative and constructive things for this province and this country, and you rightly have a claim on the interest of this Legislature, the support of the government and the tax revenues of Her Majesty's loyal subjects living in Ontario. But this is a two-way street: You have an obligation to become more flexible, more sensitive and more understanding of the contemporary reality.

Because there's a lot of rhetoric around that would make you think that the universities and their post-secondary colleagues are on the cutting edge of a new tomorrow; there's a lot of rhetoric and there is some evidence, but I want to say that there is still, from my personal experience, altogether too much evidence that this is still a very comfortable pew of a very considerable status quo, and the community has a right to expect more leadership, more adaptability and more creativity from this sector than, quite frankly, we have been getting over the last number of years.

I was polite the day that group came, but it was everything I could do to hold my very considerable tongue and my even more considerable temper in check and in silence and to say nothing of the pitch which was essentially this—I'm talking now about the presentation made by the university professors association to the standing committee on economic affairs just three months ago in the midst of a gut-wrenching hardship

that is hurting the people of this province in a very real way. The best the university professors association could do was to say, essentially: "We're underfunded. Raise taxes and send us more money."

To hell with you if that's all you've got to tell this Legislature in the spring of 1993. I expect more than I got that day.

When I go to institutions—and I graduated from two of them, the old Waterloo Lutheran and Queen's University—and I look at some of the progress that's been made, I'm impressed, but I look at some of what yet remains to be done. I look at my rural community, I look at the area that I represent, a big chunk of rural eastern Ontario. I see the chief government whip; he represents a very similar kind of constituency north of Highway 7. I ask myself when I'm in communities like Eganville and Cobden and Barry's Bay, and I see the Speaker and I'm sure he wonders up in Minden and Haliburton, what kind of community outreach has there been from some of these universities and colleges? Oh, there is no doubt there is some, but when I hear about just how conservative and careful and cautious, the mountain has got to be taken to the institution in most cases. The idea that there's going to be a real and effective outreach—boy, not too much evidence to support that, in many cases.

1750

I think of the great experiments that Father Coady and the people at St Francis Xavier had decades ago with cooperative education, community-based education, going out to those miners in Cape Breton and along. How much of that have we seen from the Ontario universities?

We've seen some, but as far as I'm concerned not enough, and I'm getting a little angry about the fact that while everything and everybody from Sears Roebuck to Ontario Hydro is having to change and having to change in ways they never imagined possible five years ago, five months ago in some cases, we've still got, according to some of my professorial friends and on the basis of some of my own anecdotal evidence, too much of the comfortable pew of a very considerable status quo that increasingly does not meet the emerging needs of this province and its citizenry in the last years of this century.

I say again, it's kind of unfair to do this to poor Dr Grier and his colleagues because Ryerson has set a very good example, and I am sure that, now that it is a polytechnical university, all of the dizzying opportunities that this nomenclature provides will not distract it from the successes it has enjoyed in the past and that it will not do anything but continue the innovative and creative programs in, particularly, polytechnical education in the coming years and in the coming century.

Having served as Minister of Education for about four years in the last administration, I have many

memories, but one memory I have that is going to be a long time leaving me is the notion of the territorial imperative—the high schools that weren't talking to the colleges that weren't talking to the universities.

We were encouraged to take public dollars and develop articulation programs. What are they? Oh, that's just an opportunity, really, a linkage between high school, college and university. A lot of the taxpayers I represent just assume that is happening, that in Kingston, Queen's and St Lawrence and the various high schools are talking very routinely and that we've got program integration that allows a good technical student, for example, to proceed through high school, then to get into a college program and to proceed through that college program maybe into the workforce and then to go back to Queen's or some other place and not be told: "Oh, the experiential learning counts for nothing, the college program. We are a university. Therefore, we don't recognize any of this. Back to square one." It's that kind of barrier building that has hurt and hindered this province.

Happy day for Ryerson. Delighted to see my friends here. On with a good cause, and I'm sure, Dr Grier and colleagues, that at the turn of the century we will look back on this development as just yet another positive step in a long and storied tradition at one of our great educational institutions.

The Acting Speaker: Questions and/or comments?

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I rise to support the comments made by the member for Renfrew North. As many members and, Mr Speaker, you might know, Ryerson is right next door to my riding and many of its students and I'm sure a few of its professors and teachers live in my riding as well. Of course I will support this bill and I think it's a wonderful thing that it will now be a polytechnic university.

In the course of campaigning recently in the by-election, I spent a lot of time knocking on doors in Regent Park and St James Town. I think one of the important functions of a university, and of Ryerson as a collegiate institute, is its outreach programs, and I know that there were some 40,000-odd people in the continuing education program there.

I know that Ryerson is an example and I hope other universities and institutions take that example, because I can think of the people in Regent Park and St James Town, many people who are coming new into Canada and have been here for a while who need access to the training and the trades and the programs that are available at Ryerson and other post-secondary institutions that can provide them a transition into the Canadian workforce and the Canadian economy.

I only hope, and make this a cautionary tale, I guess, that outreach will continue and will be expanded. I can think of many people in my riding who are, as youth,

suffering from unemployment and the difficulties related to the current economic climate and require greater training and greater access to the kinds of facilities and services that Ryerson can provide. I only hope that I can look forward to working with them as a university to provide those services for my constituents.

The Acting Speaker: Further questions and/or comments? The honourable member for Renfrew North has two minutes to respond.

Mr Conway: I'll yield, Mr Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: I believe the honourable member for Kingston and The Islands wishes to wind up.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I'm sure we're all very happy to reach this point in the debate where I can thank all members in the House, those who spoke to the bill before us, and I think it reflects the—

The Acting Speaker: If I might just interject, was there anyone who wanted to involve himself in the debate before we move to the honourable member?

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: No. I'm sorry. The honourable member for Kingston and The Islands.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd just again like to thank everyone. I began my remarks on this debate by referring to the joyous atmosphere at Ryerson that greeted the news that the name would be changed, and we heard bits and pieces of it here today.

I think it's well launched on its way, but I would like to read just one of the objects from the bill, because I think it reminds us that while there is a tendency to try to twist education to the purposes of a particular party, I think the project is greater than all of us and will yield results that will benefit everybody.

This object refers to the advancement of learning, the intellectual, social, moral, cultural, spiritual and physical development of university students and employees and the betterment of society. I think that's a goal we can all support, I think that by changing the name, that represents a small but significant step towards that goal.

The Acting Speaker: Mr Wilson, Kingston and The Islands, has moved second reading of Bill 1. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Agreed.

It now being 6 of the clock, this House do now adjourn till tomorrow, May 18, at 1:30 of the clock.

The House adjourned at 1758.

ERRATA

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THIRD READINGS

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Ms Murdock 730

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
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Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Algoma	Wildman, Hon/L'hon Bud	ND	Minister of Environment and Energy, minister responsible for native affairs / ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A.	L	
Beaches-Woodbine	Lankin, Hon/L'hon Frances	ND	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Brampton North/-Nord	McClelland, Carman	L	
Brampton South/-Sud	Callahan, Robert V.	L	
Brant-Haldimand	Eddy, Ron	L	
Brantford	Ward, Hon/L'hon Brad	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Finance / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Finances
Bruce	Elston, Murray J.	L	
Burlington South/-Sud	Jackson, Cameron	PC	
Cambridge	Farnan, Mike	ND	
Carleton	Sterling, Norman W.	PC	
Carleton East/-Est	Morin, Gilles E.	L	Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président et Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Chatham-Kent	Hope, Randy R.	ND	
Cochrane North/-Nord	Wood, Len	ND	
Cochrane South/-Sud	Bisson, Gilles	ND	
Cornwall	Cleary, John C.	L	
Don Mills	Johnson, David	PC	
Dovercourt	Silipo, Hon/L'hon Tony	ND	Minister of Community and Social Services / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Downsview	Perruzza, Anthony	ND	
Dufferin-Peel	Tilson, David	PC	
Durham Centre/-Centre	White, Drummond	ND	
Durham East/-Est	Mills, Gord	ND	
Durham West/-Ouest	Wiseman, Jim	ND	
Durham-York	O'Connor, Larry	ND	
Eglinton	Poole, Dianne	L	
Elgin	North, Peter	ND	
Essex-Kent	Hayes, Pat	ND	
Essex South/-Sud	Mancini, Remo	L	
Etobicoke-Humber	Henderson, D. James	L	
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Grier, Hon/L'hon Ruth A.	ND	Minister of Health / ministre de la Santé
Etobicoke-Rexdale	Philip, Hon/L'hon Ed	ND	Minister of Municipal Affairs / ministre des Affaires municipales
Etobicoke West/-Ouest	Stockwell, Chris	PC	
Fort William	McLeod, Lyn	L	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
Fort York	Marchese, Rosario	ND	
Frontenac-Addington	Wilson, Hon/L'hon Fred	ND	Minister without Portfolio / ministre sans portefeuille
Grey	Murdoch, Bill	PC	
Guelph	Fletcher, Derek	ND	
Halton Centre/-Centre	Sullivan, Barbara	L	
Halton North/-Nord	Duignan, Noel	ND	
Hamilton Centre/-Centre	Christopherson, Hon/L'hon David	ND	Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services / solliciteur général et ministre des Services correctionnels
Hamilton East/-Est	Mackenzie, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Hamilton Mountain	Charlton, Hon/L'hon Brian	ND	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, government House leader and minister responsible for the automobile insurance review / président du Conseil de gestion, leader parlementaire du gouvernement et ministre délégué à l'Assurance-automobile
Hamilton West/-Ouest	Allen, Hon/L'hon Richard	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère du Développement économique et du Commerce
Hastings-Peterborough	Buchanan, Hon/L'hon Elmer	ND	Minister of Agriculture and Food / ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation

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High Park-Swansea	Ziemba, Hon/L'hon Elaine	ND	Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for human rights, disability issues, seniors' issues and race relations / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre déléguée aux Droits de la personne, aux Affaires des personnes handicapées, aux Affaires des personnes âgées et aux Relations interraciales
Huron	Klopp, Paul	ND	
Kenora	Miclash, Frank	L	
Kingston and The Islands / Kingston et Les Îles	Wilson, Gary	ND	
Kitchener	Ferguson, Will	Ind	
Kitchener-Wilmot	Cooper, Mike	ND	Minister of Transportation, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Transports, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Lake Nipigon/Lac-Nipigon	Pouliot, Hon/L'hon Gilles	ND	
Lambton	MacKinnon, Ellen	ND	
Lanark-Renfrew	Jordan, W. Leo	PC	
Lawrence	Cordiano, Joseph	L	
Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W.	PC	Attorney General, minister responsible for women's issues / procureure générale, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Lincoln	Hansen, Ron	ND	
London Centre/-Centre	Boyd, Hon/L'hon Marion	ND	
London North/-Nord	Cunningham, Dianne	PC	
London South/-Sud	Winninger, David	ND	
Markham	Cousens, W. Donald	PC	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; chief government whip / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs ; whip en chef du gouvernement
Middlesex	Mathysen, Irene	ND	
Mississauga East/-Est	Sola, John	Ind	
Mississauga North/-Nord	Offer, Steven	L	
Mississauga South/-Sud	Marland, Margaret	PC	
Mississauga West/-Ouest	Mahoney, Steven W.	L	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; chief government whip / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs ; whip en chef du gouvernement
Muskoka-Georgian Bay	Waters, Daniel	ND	
Nepean	Daigeler, Hans	L	
Niagara Falls	Harrington, Margaret H.	ND	
Niagara South/-Sud	Coppen, Hon/L'hon Shirley	ND	
Nickel Belt	Laughren, Hon/L'hon Floyd	ND	Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Nipissing	Harris, Michael	PC	
Norfolk	Jamison, Norm	ND	
Northumberland	Fawcett, Joan M.	L	
Oakville South/-Sud	Carr, Gary	PC	
Oakwood	Rizzo, Tony	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Municipal Affairs / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère des Affaires municipales
Oriole	Caplan, Elinor	L	
Oshawa	Pilkey, Hon/L'hon Allan	ND	
Ottawa Centre/-Centre	Gigantes, Hon/L'hon Evelyn	ND	
Ottawa East/-Est	Grandmaître, Bernard C.	L	
Ottawa-Rideau	O'Neill, Yvonne	L	Minister of Housing / ministre du Logement
Ottawa South/-Sud	McGuinty, Dalton J.P.	L	
Ottawa West/-Ouest	Chiarelli, Robert	L	
Oxford	Sutherland, Kimble	ND	
Parkdale	Ruprecht, Tony	L	
Parry Sound	Eves, Ernie	PC	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Health / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de la Santé
Perth	Haslam, Hon/L'hon Karen	ND	
Peterborough	Carter, Jenny	ND	Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Education and Training / ministre sans portefeuille, ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation
Port Arthur	Wark-Martyn, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	
Prescott and Russell / Prescott et Russell	Poirier, Jean	L	Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Prince Edward-Lennox-South	Johnson, Paul R.	ND	
Hastings/Prince Edward-Lennox-Hastings-Sud			
Quinte	O'Neil, Hugh P.	L	
Rainy River	Hampton, Hon/L'hon Howard	ND	
Renfrew North/-Nord	Conway, Sean G.	L	

Constituency/Circonscription	Member/Député(e)	Party/Parti	Other responsibilities/Autres responsabilités
Riverdale	Churley, Hon/L'hon Marilyn	ND	Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations / ministre de la Consommation et du Commerce
S-D-G & East Grenville / S-D-G et Grenville-Est	Villeneuve, Noble	PC	
St Andrew-St Patrick	Akande, Zanana	ND	Speaker / Président
St Catharines	Bradley, James J.	L	
St Catharines-Brock	Haeck, Christel	ND	
St George-St David	Murphy, Tim	L	
Sarnia	Huget, Bob	ND	
Sault Ste Marie / Sault-Sainte-Marie	Martin, Tony	ND	
Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry	L	
Scarborough Centre/-Centre	Owens, Stephen	ND	
Scarborough East/-Est	Frankford, Robert	ND	
Scarborough-Ellesmere	Warner, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Scarborough North/-Nord	Curling, Alvin	L	Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation / ministre de la Culture, du Tourisme et des Loisirs
Scarborough West/-Ouest	Swarbrick, Hon/L'hon Anne	ND	
Simcoe Centre/-Centre	Wessenger, Paul	ND	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Simcoe East/-Est	McLean, Allan K.	PC	
Simcoe West/-Ouest	Wilson, Jim	PC	
Sudbury	Murdock, Sharon	ND	
Sudbury East/-Est	Martel, Hon/L'hon Shelley	ND	
Timiskaming	Ramsay, David	L	
Victoria-Haliburton	Drainville, Dennis	Ind	Minister of Education and Training, minister responsible for the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / ministre de l'Éducation et de la Formation, ministre responsable du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main- d'oeuvre
Waterloo North/-Nord	Witmer, Elizabeth	PC	
Welland-Thorold	Kormos, Peter	ND	
Wellington	Amott, Ted	PC	
Wentworth East/-Est	Morrow, Mark	ND	
Wentworth North/-Nord	Abel, Donald	ND	
Willowdale	Harnick, Charles	PC	
Wilson Heights	Kwinter, Monte	L	
Windsor-Riverside	Cooke, Hon/L'hon David	ND	
Windsor-Sandwich	Dadamo, George	ND	
Windsor-Walkerville	Lessard, Wayne	ND	
York Centre/-Centre	Sorbara, Gregory S.	L	Premier, President of the Executive Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / premier ministre, président du Conseil exécutif, ministre des Affaires gouvernementales
York East/-Est	Malkowski, Gary	ND	
York Mills	Turnbull, David	PC	
York North/-Nord	Beer, Charles	L	
York South/-Sud	Rae, Hon/L'hon Bob	ND	
Yorkview	Mammoliti, George	ND	

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No. 21



N° 21

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 18 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 18 mai 1993

Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Tuesday 18 May 1993

The House met at 1333.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

COURT REPORTERS

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): Mr Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of the Attorney General a very serious problem. It's reported in today's *Globe and Mail* and I'm advised personally by court reporters, some 700 or more who have served this province well over the years, that their jobs may very well be in jeopardy.

The Attorney General has announced a plan to replace court reporters with microphones and computers. I suggest that if this were the loss of union jobs of people in factories due to automation, the NDP would be shouting. Instead, what they do is simply remain silent and allow this ill-conceived plan to take shape.

There are judges and lawyers throughout this province who are terribly concerned about this. The transcription of the words that are spoken, particularly in a criminal court, are especially essential in terms of determining justice for an accused and, in civil matters, for the working out of disputes in civil litigation. I suggest that if you have microphones taking the place of human beings, you're going to have every cough, sputter and everything else on it, but you will be hardly getting what is truly just for the people who are the litigants.

I suggest that the Attorney General perhaps should find out who the light-brained person in her department was who thought up this scheme, because in fact it's not a saving of money to the province. They talk about \$20 million being saved. I can tell you, reporters have served this province well for probably minimum wage or a little bit better. They make their money on printing transcripts that are paid for by the lawyers themselves. The justices and lawyers and judges of this province wish the reporters to remain.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): My statement's for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. It concerns the Commission on Planning and Development Reform in Ontario, more commonly known as the Sewell commission, which is scheduled to complete its final report some time this month.

Minister, the Sewell commission's draft report contains a number of policy proposals that could very well bring any form of development in rural Ontario to a grinding halt. For example, the Sewell commission suggests that private septs should be inspected every three years and pumped out regularly, with all costs charged to the owner. This is nothing but a blatant tax

grab and will make developers think twice before they consider investing in rural Ontario.

I have always had concerns that members of the Sewell commission failed to recognize that rural regions of Ontario have concerns that are distinct from those of the urban regions. It is important for the final report of the Sewell commission to include recommendations that take these differences into account. These recommendations must deal with the economic and social problems of rural Ontario, especially the issues of planning, resource development and the environment. It is extremely important that rural regions be given representation at every level of decision-making, and that includes disentanglement and the downloading on municipalities across this province.

EVENTS IN MIDDLESEX

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): As always, it was a busy weekend in Middlesex. On Saturday, May 15, I had the opportunity to participate in two special events. The first, with invited guests the Honourable Marion Boyd, MPP London Centre, and David Winninger, London South, was a special presentation by Labatt's of London to Fanshawe Pioneer Village in my riding. Labatt's has donated the original and historic John Labatt Brewery to the pioneer village. In addition, Labatt's is providing funding towards the cost of the move from west London to the Fanshawe Park location northeast of the city.

Over the winter, the dedicated staff of Fanshawe will prepare the brewery for visitors and history buffs fortunate enough to visit Fanshawe Pioneer Village and share in the rich history of the London and Middlesex area. It is also a fitting way for Labatt's to say thank you to a community that has contributed significantly to the success of John Labatt Ltd.

The second event was the first annual inspection for 201 Dorchester Royal Canadian Air Cadets. The members of Dorchester 201 Squadron, sponsored by Branch 513 of the Donnybrook Royal Canadian Legion, had a great deal to celebrate on Saturday. In addition to this first inspection, the cadets were honoured by the presence of members of the original 201 Toronto Squadron, which began in 1942. Dorchester 201 unveiled its new crest and was honoured with many presentations by the community.

OXFORD REGIONAL CENTRE

Mrs Yvonne O'Neill (Ottawa-Rideau): My statement is on the closure of the Oxford Regional Centre. As many expected, and from confirmation through an internal document of the Ministry of Community and Social Services, it has now been confirmed that the Oxford Regional Centre will close in 1996.

We all know that there are thousands of developmentally disabled people in this province who are on waiting lists. Yet the same internal ministry document I mentioned earlier states that there will be no increase in transfer payments to social service agencies, these same agencies which will be expected now to meet the needs of the residents of the Oxford centre.

At present, there are 522 staff working at the centre. The ministry is projecting a more than 60% staff decrease in this first year, 1993-94, as it phases out this program. The ministry must assure the families and the present residents of the Oxford Regional Centre that quality care and meaningful programs will be maintained in this important time of transition.

The minister knows and I know that the residents mandated for transition to the community are multiply handicapped individuals with intellectual impairments and often with behavioural problems. As new community settings are developed, parents who have mounting anxieties and concerns must be guaranteed a prominent place at the table.

1340

LOU PARSONS

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Lou Parsons, the chairman of GO Transit, has been named Ontario's 1993 Transportation Person of the Year. This award goes to the individual whose leadership throughout his career has improved and advanced the transportation industry. No one is more deserving of this tribute than Lou Parsons.

Lou has dedicated his life to improving transportation and enhancing Ontario's national and international reputation in the ground transportation field. A founding member of the GO Transit board when it became a crown agency in September 1974, Lou Parsons has been a driving force at GO ever since. He served as a vice-chair of GO from 1974 to 1979 and has been the chair since 1980.

Under Lou Parsons's direction, GO has grown from a fledgling interregional transit service to an internationally recognized, state-of-the-art, integrated system which has received numerous awards. On the safety front, GO has been recognized as the safest transportation system in North America.

This award is a demonstration of the respect that Lou's local and national peers have always had and continue to have for his abilities, but his leadership and prowess have also been recognized on the international scene: Lou Parsons is the only Canadian ever to have chaired the American Public Transit Association. His election to that post in 1991 saw his talents being put to use leading an organization which includes over 1,000 members.

SENECA COLLEGE CAMPUS

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): Mr Speaker, I

was almost late today. I rushed over here from a rally that took place at Jane and Finch in my riding of Yorkview.

Right at the corner of York Gate Boulevard and Finch Avenue is this big, huge, open piece of land, a perfect spot for a Seneca College campus. Last week I asked the Minister of Education and Training a question. That question was: What are you going to do about a Seneca College campus? What are you going to do when the consultants come to you and say that a campus should be placed somewhere west of Yonge Street, and when they recommend that perhaps that campus should be placed at Jane and Finch, what are you going to do?

I'm hoping he's going to say yes, we are going to invest in the future of the people in my community. I hope we're going to invest in the people right now who currently need the education. We are sick and tired of travelling 20 miles to the closest college. We want a college in our community. The Jane and Finch community has been asking four years. I hope the minister is listening, because I know that recommendation is going to come down.

I want to thank all of those students from the YESS committee: Yorkview Educates Students for Seneca. This is an important issue. I hope the minister puts a college campus at Jane and Finch.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I think yesterday we saw another sign of the way the Rae government chooses to operate. Yesterday the government quietly introduced a bill that is going to set up four new capital corporations that will bring in new debt, off the government books, probably \$5 billion.

We pleaded with the Premier in December to bring the legislation forward well before the budget so we could look at it and see whether it had any sense to it at all. What did we see yesterday? No ministerial statement. It was not announced in the House when we in the opposition would have had an opportunity to comment on it. It was introduced quietly under a procedure that you're aware of, Mr Speaker, where the minister introduced it under the introduction of bills. It should have been a ministerial statement, without question.

We pleaded with the Premier in December. I had an undertaking by the Premier. I thought he appreciated the importance of this and that we would have a chance to debate it.

This bill will no doubt run up enormous debts. All the school boards in this province will now borrow, with a commitment by the province to repay it. It will be a way of hiding, we think, at least \$5 billion worth of new debt.

Rather than bringing it forward and giving the

opposition a chance to comment on it, it was introduced quietly. I think, unfortunately, this is typical of how Rae is now choosing to operate, rather than giving the opposition a chance to comment on important bills.

ROYAL WEEK

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): I wish to inform the House that this is Royal Week 1993 and has been declared so by many municipalities across Ontario, including the city of Burlington.

Royal Week celebrates Canada's heritage as a community living under the crown and the many benefits we share as a constitutional monarchy with the Queen as our head of state. Royal Week culminates in the celebration of Victoria Day on May 24, which honours the 174th anniversary of the birth of Queen Victoria, the reigning monarch at Canadian Confederation, and the birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This year also marks the 40th anniversary of Her Majesty's coronation on June 2, 1953, and of the royal title Queen of Canada.

The Queen's birthday parade will be the focus of the celebrations on Victoria Day as it makes its way up University Avenue to Queen's Park. Colourful militia and historical units, bands, multicultural and heritage groups will be reviewed by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and by you, Mr Speaker.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the organizers of the parade, Garry Toffoli, the Ontario chairman of the Monarchist League of Canada, and Arthur Bousfield, the Dominion vice-chairman, for all the hard work that they put into organizing this truly beautiful parade each and every year.

As an honorary life member of the Monarchist League of Canada and on behalf of my colleagues in the Conservative caucus, I reaffirm my allegiance to the Queen of Canada and invite all members of the Legislature to join me in that commitment, especially during Royal Week. God save the Queen.

CHANGE OF HEART PROGRAM

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): Now that spring is here and the weather has turned warm and inviting, I would like to welcome all members of the House to come to a walk in my riding of York East by participating in the Change of Heart program.

This program, sponsored by the East York Health Unit, promotes health and wellbeing by getting involved in any of four signature walks featured in my riding. The walks are combined with an historical tour and they take place in the Crescent Town, Leaside, Pape and Thorncliffe areas. All the walks have access points to the Don Valley.

I will help to launch the historical and architectural walk A Touch of History in Leaside on the evening of Thursday, May 27. I am very proud of the beauty and the history found here in Toronto, in my own riding of

York East, and I would be delighted to have you join me in the festivities planned on the 27th. Of course, you are welcome to come any time and take part in any of the series of walks.

RETAIL STORE LEGISLATION

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): Mr Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege with respect to the treatment of Bill 38, Sunday shopping legislation, by the government. This issue involves a violation of not only my privileges but the privileges of all members of the House. At this time, Mr Speaker, I would like you to consider this breach of privilege in greater detail and report back to the House.

On November 25, 1991, a law which received royal assent prohibited the opening of stores on Sunday throughout the province. The government then introduced Bill 38 on June 4, 1992, which proposed an amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act allowing for Sunday shopping. This bill, which has yet to reach second reading, has no guarantee of passage because the Premier insisted that it would be a free vote when he introduced it to the House on June 3, 1992.

None the less, this government has indicated to police forces and crown attorneys across the province that they are not to enforce the law of this province. In effect, the government has acted as if the bill has received royal assent, even though it has not received the approval and due consideration of the members of this House.

By acting in this way, this government has brought into question the most fundamental tenet of responsible government fought for in this province since 1837, the right of the elected members to vote on legislation and hold the government accountable. By instructing the police forces of this province to not uphold a duly considered law, this government has displayed a reckless disregard, indeed an arrogance, against democratic government and the rights of all members of this Legislature.

Mr Speaker, should you find that the privileges of the members of the Legislature have been violated through the government's actions, I will introduce a motion asking you to instruct the government to enforce the law until the amendments are passed.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): To the honourable member for St George-St David, may I say first that I appreciate the way in which he has brought this matter to my attention. He raises a serious point, and it's one which I wish to have some time to reflect on. After so doing, I will report back to the member and to the House, but I thank you for drawing a serious concern to the attention of the House.

1350

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY MAILING

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: My point of privilege is

somewhat less serious than the one raised by the member for St George-St David, but nevertheless I think it's worthy of your consideration.

Sir, last week I received a piece of mail in my mailbox at home, one typically like the type of junk mail that people get now and again at their homes. This one, like those Publishers Clearing House advertisements, offers me an opportunity to win a free trip to British Columbia. All I have to do is place one of these stamps that you see here on this entry form and I'm eligible for a free trip. It also invites me to send a little bit of money along should I so choose.

When I open the letter I find that it's signed by none other than the famous Jill Marzetti, who is the executive director of the Ontario NDP, inviting me to participate in this year's New Democratic Party sweepstakes.

The thing that I find most offensive about this is that the letter says, "Dear Fellow New Democrat." Now the last time I checked I was the Liberal representative for the riding of York Centre. As a matter of privilege, I would simply ask you to ask the Premier and Jill Marzetti to stop buying lists to try and raise money and, if my name is included on their list, to please expunge my name. There is no greater insult than to be included in that band of rogues.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): To the member, it seems that the message has already been delivered. While the member doesn't have a point of order, I trust that if he wins a free trip he'll let us know.

Are there statements by ministers? It is time for oral questions.

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I recognize that a number of ministers have begun to drift in as our members have raised points of privilege. I understand that the Premier is to be late in arriving for question period today. I knew that the Treasurer was not to be present the day before the budget. The Minister of Health, I understand, is to be here but is not present in the House as we begin question period. I want to express my complete frustration at the inability to begin question period in the absence of the individuals to whom we have to direct our questions.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): While I appreciate the concern expressed, the member will know that I have no control over attendance in the House of any member. Admittedly, question period is a time for the opposition in particular to raise questions of policy and issues of concern to members of the cabinet, and it's a little difficult to do if the members of cabinet are not here. There are individual members of cabinet here. I have no control over suspending. It would not be proper for me to suspend the sitting right now.

I see the member for Bruce is anxious to raise a point

of order.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Mr Speaker, I would ask unanimous consent of the House that we recess for a period of 15 minutes and allow the ministers to come here so that we can engage in the business of the day. Failing that, I suggest that we move on to delivering petitions and other routine proceedings until the ministers actually can come here.

As you know, to allow us to put the business of the day in order, we were advised by the government House leader of those ministers who are to attend and who are going to be absent and those people who are going to be late. That way we can prepare our day's work in an orderly fashion. In fact we then are able to proceed in a reasonable way with getting the work of the House done.

With those people not now in the House who have been committed to be here, it seems to me that we have not been given correct information. That, as a result, allows us to have prepared questions which are not now to be addressed to the ministers who are supposed to be here. I ask again, may we have unanimous consent to recess for 15 minutes?

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): On the same point, Mr Speaker: It is becoming extremely frustrating, not only for opposition members but I'm sure for government backbench members as well, to not have cabinet ministers here. We received a note just now that the Premier is running late. We've had some difficulty getting a list in the last couple of days as to which cabinet ministers would in fact be in the House for question period and which ministers would not be in the House.

I would think that the government would want to give unanimous consent either to stand down question period for a few minutes until a suitable number of cabinet colleagues can arrive or to proceed with motions and petitions and some other of the routine proceedings and we can revert back to question period.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): The opposition has taken the position that they want the Premier here in the House, and we have made every effort to ensure that happens. He will be here today, albeit a little bit late, but he will be here today to answer questions. The members of the opposition have every opportunity to stand down their questions until he does arrive.

The Speaker: The first question is, is there unanimous consent to have the House adjourn for 15 minutes? No.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. On the second point raised by the honourable member for Bruce, the list which he refers to, as he will know of course, is an informal document. It is not something to which the Chair is

privy, nor does it have any status with respect to the standing orders. It is an arrangement made by the three parties, and I can offer no other information about that.

It would not be appropriate for me to rearrange the order in which we will conduct routine proceedings. We are at a point where we should begin oral questions, and I will recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs McLeod: Mr Speaker, you will recognize that I do not rise to raise frivolous points of order. We take the order of this House very seriously and we prepare for question period with a great deal of attention. I did not raise the issue of the Premier's lateness. I understood that was to be the case. We were given due notice of that and we have adjusted our order of business accordingly.

We were told the Minister of Health would be here. I served notice that my second question is to the Minister of Health. We have no indication of when she is going to arrive. I suggest, as a serious order of business in this House, that the government is simply not taking the place of question period as an order of business seriously enough, and that's why I express my frustration.

Mr Eves: Mr Speaker, could we have unanimous consent to proceed with motions, petitions, reports by committee and introduction of bills until there are a sufficient number of cabinet ministers here to proceed? We have six away today, nine away yesterday, seven away last Thursday, and seven of them can't do anything except ride around in their cars and call themselves junior ministers.

The Speaker: Unanimous consent to move to motions? Agreed? No.

The member for St Catharines.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Mr Speaker, on a point of privilege: I think the one factor the House has to take into consideration when dealing with this matter is that the House did not sit from December 10 till the second week of April, April 13, of this year. All of that time the government did not have to face the opposition or its own members on any questioning.

Now that the House is sitting for such a short period of time, surely we have the right of having the courtesy of having ministers here, the senior ministers who are going to be the subject of questions during a day, instead of being off on hotline shows and 5,000 other places.

The Speaker: Briefly, I understand the concerns raised by the member for St Catharines, the member for Parry Sound and the Leader of the Opposition. It perhaps is a subject which the three House leaders in their regular weekly meeting may wish to address since it obviously has caused some upset here in the chamber.

It is time for oral questions.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): On a

belated point, if I might, Mr Speaker?

The Speaker: No, I've dealt with this at some length. There is nothing out of order. I realize the member is an experienced member of the House. If he has something additional to offer, briefly, I will entertain it. Otherwise, we move on.

Mr Conway: You're in a very difficult position, Mr Speaker, and I appreciate that. I have a question to the Minister of Health. She was supposed to be here. She's not here.

I would ask, through you, the government House leader to indicate whether or not the people he said would be here today will in fact be true to their word, because if they're not going to be here, then quite frankly, there's no point in my being here, because I'm here to ask a question to the Minister of Health in good faith because I was told by the government House leader that she would be here. She's not here. I'd like some direction, through you, from the government House leader as to what is going to happen with the people we were told would be here to answer questions today.

Hon Mr Charlton: I have no indication that the specific member whom the member is referring to, or any other member who was on the list, is not going to be here.

1400

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): It is time for oral questions. Start the clock. I recognize—

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): The Minister of Health is lost.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Brampton South, please come to order. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): That's not what we were looking for.

The Speaker: Order. Members will note that the clock has started. I would ask members to come to order so that we can begin question period.

Interjections.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Mr Speaker, you will recognize that in a parliamentary democracy, the role of question period and my role as Leader of the Opposition is to use this time to hold the government accountable. I cannot do that if the government members will not be here to be held accountable. I have no choice but to stand down my questions until they arrive.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): Mr Speaker, in the absence of the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer, in the absence of anybody capable of answering my questions, I would ask if I could stand down my two questions.

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): My question is to the Chairman of Management Board—

Mrs McLeod: Point of order: Stand down the third question in the order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. We have stood down both leaders' questions, so we will have a single question here as soon as they come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: When the House has come to order, then we can continue. For the information of members, we have stood down two questions for the Leader of the Opposition and two questions for the leader of the third party. Therefore, we are back to the Liberal Party, the official opposition, for a single question, and we begin the rotation.

Mrs McLeod: If you had our order paper, Mr Speaker, you would know that our third question was to the Premier. We will also have to stand our third question down.

The Speaker: That isn't allowable. If you wish to relinquish your position—you can only stand down the two opening questions for both parties.

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mrs Elinor Caplan (Oriole): In light of your ruling, Mr Speaker, we place our first question to the Chairman of Management Board.

Minister, we know that over the past two months your government has been holding so-called social contract negotiations in the five-star Royal York Hotel. We know that to date you've spent in excess of \$100,000 of taxpayers' money, which has included over \$70,000 on the rental of rooms and suites, on food and courier services. We know that, at the same time, you were offered free space at Metro Hall, and you have available your own government buildings at the Macdonald Block and other such locations.

My question to you, sir, is: Why are you spending thousands of dollars on hotel facilities when you could be conducting these negotiations and these talks in the free space that is available to you?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet): I would suggest to the member opposite that there are probably 100 good answers to the question, but I think there are two primary ones.

The member made reference, for example, to the rooms in the Macdonald Block. I would think, although perhaps memories can be very short, that the member opposite would remember that the rooms in the Macdonald Block are very extensively utilized on a regular basis. In fact, very rarely do they sit empty for any considerable period of time. So it becomes a question of who meets elsewhere, not just the fact that there are rooms available in the Macdonald Block,

because they are utilized on a regular basis for ongoing government functions and others.

Secondly, the social contract negotiations which have been going on are an extremely important process, a new process albeit, and a process that has been feeling its way, with fairly regular contact between a large number of parties which in fact need room in order to consult and go forward and so on and so forth. To the best of my knowledge, the government simply sought out the best facility it could find to have that kind of process occur in.

Mrs Caplan: Of all of the answers that I expected from the Chairman of Management Board, that one is one which I think the taxpayers of this province will find completely and absolutely unacceptable.

I would remind you, sir, that just a month ago you began those discussions in your own Macdonald Block. You were offered, free of charge, Metro Hall; you turned it down. This is an issue of government waste, of government saying one thing, getting together to talk about cost cutting and profligate spending at the taxpayers' expense.

I would ask you: How can you possibly justify over \$100,000? Your talks are in chaos and you are spending taxpayers' dollars needlessly. Will you today commit to moving those talks to the free spaces that are available to you?

Hon Mr Charlton: First of all, we don't agree that the talks are in chaos.

Secondly, I repeat that the kinds of facilities that are required for the kinds of discussions with the large number of groups needing facilities in which they can consult with themselves, facilities where they can consult with each other and the facilities where they can come to the table with the negotiators are extremely important to the sensitivities around this kind of process, and we don't agree that there's a significant waste of taxpayers' money.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): New question, third party.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): May I place the first leader's question now that the Minister of Health has arrived, Mr Speaker?

The Speaker: Leader's question.

1410

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Obviously, my first question is to the Minister of Health.

Minister, I listened very carefully yesterday to the responses that you gave to the questions that were asked by the member for Renfrew North. He asked, as you will recall, what plans you have to provide for the health care services that will be lost if your ministry

acts on the proposals that have been made to the Ontario Medical Association. There were no answers, because there are no plans; because I didn't have any sense that you have really looked at what the impact of those proposals might be.

Minister, I am particularly concerned about the way in which your government has targeted medical students in this province by telling them that there are only certain places in which they are going to be able to practise. What became absolutely clear to me, Minister, in your answers yesterday was that you are simply using these students as bargaining chips in your negotiations with the Ontario Medical Association.

Minister, while you talk about negotiations, the lives of these students are on hold. They're calling our offices, they're calling your offices, they're asking where can they go, what can they do, where will they be able to practise, where will they get jobs, and there are no answers because there are no plans.

Minister, I ask you, how can you use these young people as pawns in your very poorly thought-out game? What are you telling them about where they should be going—on to the unemployment lines in five weeks' time or straight out of this province?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Let me apologize to the Leader of the Opposition for being late, but let me say in response to her question that I think it would be most unfortunate if anybody used newly graduating physicians as pawns. That is certainly not what this government is doing, I'm sure it's not what the opposition is doing and I hope it's not what the Ontario Medical Association is doing.

We tabled with the Ontario Medical Association on April 23 a long list of proposals that would better allow us to manage the resources in the health care system, particularly doctors. The idea, of course, is not to prevent new and talented doctors from serving this province but to make sure that qualified physicians do not graduate simply to serve in areas where there is already an oversupply of doctors, and that we have the best qualified people in all the parts of the province and for all the populations of the province who need them.

We had anticipated that we would quickly be able to discuss that with the Ontario Medical Association. A regularly scheduled meeting for tomorrow has now been cancelled by the OMA, maybe because it's budget day, but we certainly hope that it is not because they do not wish to sit down and discuss management practice suggestions that are not new to them—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Mrs Grier: —that are in place in other provinces and that have been under discussion with the OMA for quite some time.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): If the meeting for tomorrow has been cancelled, it's because the options which the government has put on the table are arbitrary, they're unplanned and they're simply stupid.

Three graduates in this year's class intended to provide primary care for HIV patients in Toronto. One graduate of this year's medical school intended to work with people who are addicted at the Queen-Dufferin centre. All of those graduates have been locked out—locked out, I say to you, Minister, because that's precisely what you've done with this policy. What about the paediatrician who intended to work in cancer care in Toronto with paediatric patients? That person has been locked out.

What account did you take of the health care needs of the people? You are number-crunching and you weren't paying any attention to what people needed in terms of treatment. What analysis did you do? What planning did you do? This is stupid and everybody knows it's stupid.

Hon Mrs Grier: I participated in a number of negotiations, our government has participated in a number of negotiations, and to justify the refusal to negotiate on the basis that they don't like some of the proposals that have been made is frankly not the kind of negotiation that I expect from the Ontario Medical Association or that I believe is in fact its intention.

I'm very pleased that we have a framework agreement with the OMA, an agreement that provides for a joint management committee to meet and to discuss issues of concern, both about the quality of health care, which is the objective we both share, and the cost of health care.

The proposals we have tabled with the OMA are proposals that will lead us to both protect and preserve medicare, which we believe cannot happen if we allow the costs to go simply out of control. It is certainly my hope that the Ontario Medical Association will sit at the table with us and will address precisely the kind of concerns the member has raised.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): Since our discussion yesterday afternoon, Madam Minister, I have spoken to hospital and other health care providers in the communities of Pembroke, Renfrew, Deep River and Barry's Bay and, to a person, in those small cities and rural communities in my part of eastern Ontario they are very, very worried about this package of proposals which you have offered under the rubric of an expenditure control plan for physicians' services, which you and your government have already decided will this year strip out \$275 million worth of public moneys for health programs in this province. That has been decided. In my rural communities these people have said that this package of proposals, taken as a whole, will seriously impair the level of services, most especially in the area

of emergency services at these small rural hospitals.

My question, on behalf of the thousands of rural people I represent in places like Barry's Bay and Pembroke and Deep River is, what are your alternatives to ensure that there is going to be a reasonable level of health care to people being served in rural, small-town and small-city Ontario?

Hon Mrs Grier: As I said to the member yesterday, the opportunity and the location for the discussion about how to best manage resources in health care are provided through our discussions with the Ontario Medical Association. We want to see those proceed as quickly as possible. It has now been three weeks since we laid some proposals before the Ontario Medical Association, and we are ready, waiting and anxious to have the discussions that will serve, I believe, to alleviate the very real concern that he is expressing on behalf of his constituents.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): My question is for the Minister of Labour and it concerns the Workplace Health and Safety Agency. All in this House support the concept of making workplaces safe. It's not a partisan issue. But it's essential that safety training programs are realistic, reasonable and affordable and that training resources are allocated appropriately so that the safety of all workers is ensured.

In Wellington county there is a firm called L&M Food Markets, which is a chain of supermarkets owned by Merlen Kropf. Minister, your agency is asking this chain of supermarkets, for each store, to send two employees for two full weeks of safety training at a cost of at least \$6,900 per store. My question is this: Does the Minister really believe that a grocery store is so dangerous that workers and management require two full weeks of safety training?

Hon Bob Mackenzie (Minister of Labour): The health and safety agency has set up a certification program for various types of hazardous workplaces, whether they're factories, whether they're food shops, whether they're office operations, and they have set in place a training system for those workplaces. I'm not going to second-judge the decisions that were made by a joint labour-management group that decided on the process for health and safety.

Mr Arnott: That agency is not working properly. I'll tell you it is totally unreasonable for grocery store workers to have two full weeks of safety training. This is a grocery store, not a mine, not a construction site, not a nuclear generating facility, not even a factory. The inappropriate use of these training resources may actually endanger the workers in the most hazardous of workplaces.

I know Merlen Kropf; I worked for him when I was

in high school. He's concerned about workplace safety because he's concerned about his employees and the safety of his customers. He's a job creator, and your agency is rewarding him by sending him letters threatening a \$500,000 fine or even imprisonment.

How can the minister justify this agency threatening the job creators of this province and its refusal to use its training resources sensibly on the most hazardous workplaces first so that all workers are protected in the province?

Hon Mr Mackenzie: Under the new health and safety legislation in the province of Ontario, I am sure the member knows that there are almost 100,000 workers who will now be going through the certification process. I certainly believe that workers in all different operations and different classifications need the health and safety training program. I don't think two weeks is too long a period of time whatsoever. I know that a number of the unions in the field he's talking about say that's the only way you're going to begin to cover adequately the workers in those operations.

1420

HEALTH CARE

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): My question is to the Minister of Health. Mrs Minister, there has been quite a bit of discussion around the Legislature and other venues with regard to the proposal the government has put forward to the OMA about fee differentials in terms of doctors' billings. I have a community in my riding, the community of Matheson, which, as of about a month ago, had to shut down its emergency department in evenings and on weekends because it hasn't been able to attract doctors into that community. They've been short a number of doctors for almost six or seven months now.

The question I have to you, Mrs Minister, is very clear: Under the proposal made to the Ontario Medical Association, if agreed to, first of all, would the community of Matheson be designated as an underserved community so that it would be able to benefit in regard to this particular proposal?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): It's certainly my expectation that the proposal we have made to the Ontario Medical Association with respect to differential fees will contribute greatly to finally providing physicians for areas of northern Ontario where I know a number of my colleagues and colleagues on all sides of the House have been concerned because the existing underserved areas program, which has been in place for 22 years, has not in fact met the need.

There is no doubt that the definition of "underserved areas" is probably not, at this point, appropriate to identifying where the needs are, and I hope as part of our discussions with the OMA that we can come to a better definition so that we can make sure that commun-

ities such as Matheson, where I know the member is very concerned, can in fact have the kind of health care that they need and that their residents deserve.

Mr Bisson: In my travels around the riding this weekend at a number of public functions, one of the discussions we got into was around the fee differential. If I'm reading the constituents right, once they understand the proposal, they're very much in favour of what the minister is proposing in regard to being able to have an actual tool that would help us attract doctors into communities that are underserved.

The question I have to you is, what can we do, as members of our communities, to assist the Minister of Health and the government to try to get the OMA to the table to discuss this issue that, to me, in the long run would address a long-standing issue in underserved areas in terms of the ability to attract doctors?

Hon Mrs Grier: I agree that many communities in northern Ontario continue to be underserved and that there are some very special needs and demands for medical practitioners for practising in the north. I certainly think this is an issue that can be resolved, and we want to work with health care providers, with the district health councils and with other interested groups to develop a list of areas and patient populations that do have special needs. It's in the course of our discussions with the Ontario Medical Association that we are hoping to better define those areas.

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): Just so that I can be clear, in the absence of the Premier, to whom my leader wants to ask a question, we're starting the second round?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): That's correct.

Mr Brown: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources, and it concerns the commitment this government has to protecting ecologically important areas of this province.

As part of the expenditure control plan, the Minister of Finance has announced that the conservation authorities that carry out very important management functions in our watersheds would incur a significant cut to their expenditures this year. At the same time, the conservation lands tax rebate program, which is vital to a number of these authorities, will not be paying the property tax on environmentally important lands. It is our information that as many as nine or 10 of these conservation authorities are considering selling environmentally and ecologically important lands in order to pay the bills.

Mr Minister, do you condone the sale of these lands by authorities in order to balance their budgets this year and, if not, what are you going to tell them?

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural

Resources): In fact, the issue the member raises has been one that we've already discussed with individual conservation authorities and the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario. I think it needs to be recognized that some conservation authorities indeed possess land which is not integral to their conservation activities. We are willing to discuss with those conservation authorities the possibility that they may sell some of that land which is not part of their conservation mandate. We do not think the situation is so serious that any conservation authority will need to entertain the idea of selling actual conservation land.

Mr Brown: As the minister would know, many of the lands owned by conservation authorities have been paid for by volunteer groups in this country and province. We find it very strange that he would give such an answer.

The conservation authorities are fiscally responsible. They have presented a program to the minister which would save the ministry \$25 million to \$100 million in the administration of permitting etc in those areas. I would like a commitment from the minister that he will look at that plan seriously and convene representatives of all the ministries that are involved in that permitting-regulation plan in order that he can effect that \$25 million to \$100 million in savings.

Minister, will you commit that your ministry will convene the meeting that gets all these people together so that the province can save the money that it needs in order to pay your property taxes?

Hon Mr Hampton: When we met a week and a half ago with the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario, we indicated to it that we wanted to meet again in one month's time. At that time we would hope that they would bring forward proposals that could do away with the duplication of some of the services that exist, that could provide for greater integration between the work that conservation authorities do and that some ministries do.

We continue to encourage the Association of Conservation Authorities to do that. We think that is an excellent way of saving taxpayers' money, and I hope the member opposite will support us as we work through this very important process.

ATTENDANCE OF PREMIER

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It's almost an hour since proceedings started today. In fact, it is an hour since proceedings started. Is the Premier going to be here or is he not going to be here, so we can proceed with our lead questions? This is a little ridiculous, to say the least.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Can the government House leader be of any assistance?

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): My information is that he's on his way.

The Speaker: I recognize the member for Dufferin-Peel with a question.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Dufferin-Peel has the floor.

TIRE RECYCLING

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): My question is to the Minister of Environment and Energy.

Some time ago, Mr Minister, you expressed some concern about the export of millions of tires to Connecticut, where they would be burned for a \$93-million hydro plant for the production of electricity. At that time you said, "The federal government has approved the export, and I hope they would reconsider that."

Currently your government's policy is that you won't allow tires to be put in landfill sites. You won't allow them to be burned for the purposes of producing energy. Now it's being suggested that you're going to prohibit people from shipping tires outside of our jurisdiction for whatever purpose they see fit, whether it be the United States or other provinces.

More recently, officials from the waste reduction office for the Ministry of Environment and Energy have said that there would be no further assistance for operators who wish to crumb tires. That is the statement that had been made.

Interjection.

Mr Tilson: Well, I'm telling you they have, that a number of officials have made these statements to people who are applying for crumbing tires.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member have a question?

Mr Tilson: My question to the minister is, having made all of these policies, what do you intend to do with the 10 million used tires that are being stockpiled in Ontario each year?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The member is quite correct in one aspect of his comments; that is, that I wrote to the federal Minister of the Environment, the Honourable Jean Charest, who has been busy doing some other things recently, to ask him to reconsider very seriously the opening of the border to the transport of waste to the United States, and as yet I have not received a response to that letter. I look forward to receiving it very soon.

1430

In regard to the other comments the member has made, we are indeed maintaining our policy of prohibiting the dumping of tires in landfill sites and also the incineration of tires. But we are moving very expeditiously to invest moneys that have accrued to the province from the tire tax, among other revenues, to the consolidated revenue fund to ensure that we can in fact

develop new technologies for the use of tires.

Recently I announced moneys to—

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Wildman: —Recovery Technologies in Cambridge, to Domal Envirotec Inc of Scarborough and others to do work with regard to new technologies in the use of rubber. As the member knows, we have developed a collar for sewer covers that will be using a great number of tires. We are indeed not opposed to the—

The Speaker: Would the minister please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Wildman: —use of tires for rubberized asphalt. I know the member will have other comments he would like to make in his supplementary.

Mr Tilson: I understand that since this tire tax—which you spoke out against when the Liberals introduced it, you spoke out very vigorously, you simply said it was a tax grab—over \$200 million has been collected by the combination of your government and the Liberal government for the purposes of the \$5 tax on used tires.

You and the Liberals have put only a very small portion of that—you've listed off a few minute examples where you have been spreading it around for the purposes of recycling tires. But the fact of the matter is, there's \$10 million collected each year for the purposes of the \$5 tax which you spoke out so strongly against when it was introduced by the Liberals. Just to remind you—

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Come on, put the question.

Mr Tilson: I'm trying to remind the minister what he said at that time. He said: "This tax is an attempt to raise more money from the public. The excuse that we're going to use the money to clean up the environment is just that, an excuse." You're no better than the Liberals. You're doing the very same thing the Liberals did.

The Speaker: And now the interrogative part.

Mr Tilson: My question to you is, when is the Minister of Environment going to start putting all of that \$5 tax that you charge the people of this province, resulting in \$10 million each year, into actual programs that will see this tire accumulation and fire problem decrease?

Hon Mr Wildman: I'm tempted to refer the question to my colleague in the gallery, the former member from Brant whatever, whom I'm sure we all welcome to the assembly.

However, I would say to the member seriously that in 1989 only 34% of the scrap tires in the province were being resold, retreaded or recycled. That increased to

40% in 1992, and we expect it will increase to 50% by 1994. That is because of the efforts that have been made by municipalities, by the private sector and by this government in investing moneys that have accrued from the tire tax to investment that will mean that we will lower the number of tires going to landfill and will be using more and more rubberized asphalt and others; for instance, the \$9 million we've invested in Grey and Lambton counties to experiment with asphalt from rubber.

The Speaker: Would the member take his seat, please.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I would invite all members to welcome to our midst this afternoon a very distinguished former member of the assembly, serving for some three decades for Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk, Mr Bob Nixon. Welcome.

[Applause]

The Speaker: Start the clock, please.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: We have now stood down one of the leader's questions for the Liberal Party. We've stood down two leader's questions, and it's perfect timing. I would ask, considering the fact, regardless of the time left on the clock, that you allow at least those three questions, supplementaries and responses to be put.

The Speaker: We will follow the normal procedure, and I will recognize the Leader of the Opposition for her question.

JOB CREATION

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Thank you, Mr Speaker, although I am going to preface my question with very real regret that the day before the budget neither the Premier nor the Treasurer was here to answer what we consider to be critical questions about tomorrow's budget presentation.

The fact that we will not have time to place our questions in the order that we deem to be important before budget presentation tomorrow means that we will not have an opportunity to ask important questions about a bill that this government brought in yesterday which quietly brings about a revolution in financing capital grants in this province.

I will ask the Premier my first question. Premier, we would hope that the budget you will present tomorrow would give Ontario a very badly needed message of hope in economic renewal, but we are tremendously concerned, from everything we've heard, that instead of providing positive signals it will simply hurt our fragile economy and cost more people their jobs.

The Finance minister has clearly said it's his intention to bring in a budget with hundreds of millions of dollars of new taxes. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association says that for every \$40,000 in new taxes it

will kill one job. We can assume that your budget, with its new taxes, will therefore kill thousands of jobs. Premier, the question is a simple one: How many jobs will your budget tomorrow cost Ontarians?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I hesitate to refer to the distinguished visitor in the gallery, but if we follow the logic of the honourable Leader of the Opposition, the Minister of Finance's predecessor, in raising taxes when he did for reasons that he felt were compelling, would have destroyed tens of thousands of jobs, whereas we all know in fact the period prior to the recession was one in which jobs were created.

We're now into a period again where we see some substantial signs of recovery in the economy. Over 100,000 jobs have been created in the last eight months in this province. This province has led the way in terms of economic recovery in the country in the last year.

So I can say to the honourable member that while there may be differences of opinion about the budget that will be brought down tomorrow, the thrust and theme of the budget tomorrow is jobs, the creation of jobs, the creation of opportunity and the creation of chances for all the people of the province, based on a sense of fiscal reality and, if I can quote from the words of the accord which I signed with Mr Peterson in 1985, based on the needs of fiscal responsibility, which we agreed on, largely at the urging of the former Minister of Finance and Treasurer of the province.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: So I would say to the honourable member, fiscal reality, fiscal responsibility, job creation going hand in hand, we think it's the way to go.

Mrs McLeod: Premier, this is a new day. This is no longer the era of unprecedented economic growth. This is no longer the era of record levels of employment. This is the era of record levels of unemployment: 575,000 people in this province without work, looking for jobs, hoping that your budget will give them some hope tomorrow.

Premier, the question was simple, and the math is simple: New taxes equal lost jobs. We can't afford any more lost jobs. We're asking you, how many?

According to the CMA, \$1 billion in new taxes will eliminate 25,000 jobs. That would push the unemployment rate up to 11.2%. The Conference Board of Canada says it has reduced its growth forecast for Ontario by one percentage point. According to one bank, that means another 33,000 people will lose their jobs, and that pushes unemployment up to 11.8%.

1440

Surely, Premier, you and the Treasurer have worked out the impact of your budget decisions on the economy and on the people who will be affected by those decisions. If you don't agree with the CMA, if you don't

agree with the conference board, will you tell us what studies you have done on the impact of the budget you will present, what those studies show? Will you simply tell us how many more people in this province your budget will put out of work tomorrow?

Hon Mr Rae: I can only tell the honourable member, perhaps that's a debate we should have starting tomorrow and Thursday. But I would also say to her that those same economists are saying to us that higher debt interest payments equal more unemployment, that higher debt interest equals more unemployment. The Leader of the Opposition should know that.

Let me remind her that as of April 30, last week, the week before, participants registered in the Jobs Ontario Training: 64,000; the next week, 67,000. Employers registered: 10,700 one week; the next week, 11,384. Positions registered by local brokers: 17,500 one week; 18,200 the next week. This is the program the Liberal Party wants to cancel. This is the program the Leader of the Opposition says she wants to do away with. This is the program that's creating jobs in the province.

We are out in the world. We are creating jobs. We're also dealing with the world of fiscal reality, which is more than we say for the Liberal Party of Ontario, which has been living in cloud-cuckoo-land for some years now, precisely since 1987.

Mrs McLeod: Back to basics, Premier, and the basics are: This province needs an economic recovery, your government needs to provide support to that recovery, and your new taxes will kill it as it begins.

There is no question that you have to deal with the deficit problem that you have allowed to build to crisis proportions. We agree with that. Yes, we have proposed some alternatives, a number of ways in which you could reduce your deficit and get to your budget target without increasing new taxes; and yes, we do say, review the Jobs Ontario Training program, which is not creating new jobs. It is providing employers with dollars, with important, valuable dollars to train people for jobs that need new training.

We've said, Stop the Interim Waste Authority and stop building up the kind of bureaucracy that you're going to put in place with the advocacy legislation." Look at the programs that aren't working and make your cuts there. Don't bring in new taxes that will hurt the economy and that will put even more people out of work.

Premier, why will you not at least look at the alternatives that we've been presenting with an eye to cutting spending in those areas rather than bringing in the new taxes that will put more people out of work and kill this economic recovery?

Hon Mr Rae: I'd say very bluntly to the Leader of the Opposition, I don't think she's begun to address the

fiscal realities of the province. I don't think that her proposals even begin to cut the top of the ice. I don't think the proposals she's been putting forward can be taken seriously as any kind of deficit reduction strategy.

If you were to refer them to any group of senior officials in the government and say, "How much is this going to deal with? How much is this going to save?" it would be merely a tip of the problem that this government has to face due to the seriousness of the structural deficit.

You're playing the old game with respect to opposition politics. We have to deal with a serious fiscal situation. Your party is not prepared to deal with it. It wasn't prepared to deal with it before; you're not prepared to deal with it now. Those facts are entirely clear for all the public to see.

[Applause]

The Speaker: New question. The leader of the third party.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My question is to the Premier. I understand, Premier, that you had lunch today, a rather long lunch today, with Matthew Barrett of the Bank of Montreal, according to your itinerary.

On January 18 of this year, Mr Barrett offered a strategy to eliminate government deficits and achieve high employment, a goal which I would hope that the Premier shares. Included in Mr Barrett's plan, which I'm sure the Premier read and perhaps was discussed today over lunch, was this: no increase in the tax burden for five years, no increase in government spending for five years.

Premier, after your lengthy lunch, can you come back to this Legislature today and tell us now that even though you and your Treasurer seemed to have rejected our advice and that of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and all the business associations, you're going to accept Matthew Barrett's advice? If you can do that, I'll pay for lunch today.

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): That will be the first contribution the Tory party has made to the Bank of Montreal in quite some time, I'm sure, or so I've been led to believe. I don't know; I only hear about these things.

Let me say that Mr Barrett's leadership in the province, in the country, is a leadership that I respect. I think he is somebody who cares a lot about this country and who has a sense of imagination about what needs to be done.

I will say to you, sir, what I said to him, not today, because the immediate subject of his proposal didn't come up, but at a previous chance I had to speak with him. I said to him, if we were to do what he suggested,

it would not deal adequately with the deficit problem which this province faces; it's as simple as that. In order to deal with a deficit problem which is as serious as the one this province faces, we have not only to deal with expenditure controls; we have to deal with expenditure reductions. If we were to simply freeze revenues where they have been for the last few years, we would end up with a continuing deficit problem that would be at levels which Mr Barrett himself, I'm sure, would find unacceptable.

Therefore, when it comes to this province—I can't speak for the national plan which he put forward, because he put his numbers through some other computer—when it comes to our situation here, I'm afraid we have to take measures which are even tougher than those proposed by president Barrett.

Mr Harris: I suggest to you that the chairman and chief executive officer of the Bank of Montreal might have just a tad more credibility than the NDP has and you have right now on economic issues. Matthew Barrett said this: "A further increase in our tax burden could make our problem of competitiveness more severe, which in turn would mean that higher taxes would not help us to reduce our deficits. There is no sense trying to tackle one problem while making the other worse." That's Matthew Barrett on January 18 in his plan, Recovery With Jobs. You see, his plan doesn't just deal with the deficit; it's recovery with jobs.

Premier, 55 Liberal and NDP tax increases in the last eight years have already taken eight billion job-creating dollars out of the hands of taxpayers and given them to Liberal and NDP governments which, essentially, they frittered away.

Given what you heard from Mr Barrett, given what Mr Barrett has said here, given what I'm sure Mr Barrett repeated to you at lunch—that tax hikes will in fact not help you deal with the deficit because they will not help with job creation—are you now finally willing to scrap your plans tomorrow for even more tax increases?

Hon Mr Rae: Unlike the honourable member, my memory extends beyond 1985. I don't think the tax increases brought in by treasurers started in 1985. I don't think they stopped in 1985 either. I'm surprised that he would refer to the 55 measures brought forward since 1985 and wouldn't talk about the measures brought forward since 1975 or since 1971 or since 1967, 1963, 1959, 1955, 1951, 1948, 1945 and 1943. Let's go back to those realities.

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): A more simple question: Are you better off today than you were in 1985? I don't think you are. I think I know what the answer is. Are you better off today?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Rae: The member for Parry Sound is

getting agitated because he has a sense—

Mr Harris: Why don't you take that to the people and find out what they think?

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: He's there trying to rewrite history, and I'm telling him that if you go back to the period between 1981 and 1985, indeed the government of which the member for Nipissing was such an enthusiastic supporter of the Suncor decision, enthusiastic supporter of the various tax increases brought in, enthusiastic supporter of the Frank Miller budget, which extended the sales tax, raised the sales tax, raised taxes on a whole bunch of areas—he was an enthusiastic supporter of those.

I will say to him, we have a reality to face, and I found in the discussions today with the business leaders whom I spoke to at lunch today, I wouldn't say that there was anybody taking out a party card or that indeed such were offered at the door, but I would say to him that there was a grudging recognition of the fact that this government is dealing with problems that have been some 25 years in the making and that we are now trying to deal with those problems. That's a precise quotation from some of the people who were there.

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Mr Harris: If the Premier wishes to go back to Leslie Frost, that's fine. The fundamental point is, the cumulative effect of all the tax increases has led us to the situation we are in today. You seem to have missed the fundamental principle that I believe Matthew Barrett believes, that I believe, that CFIB believes, every economist, and every business person I've talked to believes, and that is that the key to reducing your deficit is to advance a prosperity agenda to help the private sector expand.

Premier, the best way to get more revenue from corporate taxes is to have more corporations and to have them making more money. The best way to get more money from sales taxes is to have consumers with enough money in their pockets that they can spend it so that the total sales tax revenue will come up. And you can get more money from income taxes if in fact more people are working and earning money.

So that is why they are all telling you, including Matthew Barrett, the same thing that I've been trying to explain to you: Hiking taxes will kill jobs, it will kill investment and it kills our economic recovery.

So, Premier, given all of this advice from all of the people who have been out there creating jobs or trying to create jobs, how is that you listen to a few union leaders or some in your own party who think the evidence otherwise from all the experts, from all of the businesses? And given, Premier, that you look at the last—

The Speaker: Will the leader please place a question.

Mr Harris: —55 tax hikes in eight years, would you not finally agree that over the last 50 years, if you want to take that, taxpayers have done their share—

The Speaker: Would the leader please place a question.

Mr Harris: —and that it's now time for government to do its share, and will you reflect that in the budget tomorrow?

Hon Mr Rae: I guess the first three quarters of the preamble, which I found quite compelling—I think the member is quite correct. We all understand that. The economy is improving, and as the economy improves, it will produce more revenues, it will produce a stronger economy, and all of us have an obligation to do everything we can to sustain the recovery.

I would just say to the member, as non-rhetorically as I can, we've reached a conclusion that there are major expenditure reductions that have to be effected, which will be more substantial than those effected by any government in living memory, which are being carried out by this government.

Second of all, in addition to that, in order to get a sense of momentum towards deficit reduction and in order to create a stronger climate for investment in the medium to long term and in order to create a stronger climate for the private sector, we think we have to show convincingly and compellingly that this is an issue that we're prepared to deal with and deal with in a very straightforward way.

We happen to believe that the approach we're taking is balanced, that it's reasonable, that with the continuing recovery in the United States and with the continuing recovery nationally, it will help to sustain the recovery, and that a more responsible approach than the one that's being advocated is the most effective approach.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): This question is for the Premier.

Yesterday in this House, your Minister of Finance tabled very far-reaching legislation that has major implications to the future dealings of this government. It's the Capital Investment Plan Act, which has now been given the title of Bill 17. It's the creation of three crown corporations, one of which is the Ontario Financing Authority, which is charged with facilitating innovative financial arrangements for the province of Ontario.

This particular authority is designed to move substantial spending, taxing and borrowing off the books of the province into a separate agency. In other words, they're transferring capital expenditures to crown corporations.

Another way of looking at it, when you start reading what this is all about, is that it's a shell game, a shell game in which you're moving the shell around but the nut ends up out there somewhere else so it's off the books of the province of Ontario. It's another way of

saying you're cooking the books, if you really want to get down to what this government is doing.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member have a question?

Mr Cousens: I have a question, Mr Speaker. My question is, what merit is there in this government forming such a corporation except to cook the books?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): Well, this is a subject the member says—I must say it's something I have been interested in since my days in—

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): You were opposed to it when you were in opposition.

Hon Mr Rae: No, I wasn't. Since my days in opposition—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: The member for St Catharines normally ascribes all kinds of views to me. Perhaps I could just tell him that I have been supportive of the notion of a clearer delineation between investment decisions and spending decisions by governments since 1978.

Mr Bradley: You were against crown corporations. I remember that.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: If you want to go back and get truly bored, you'll read some of the speeches I gave in the House of Commons on this subject in 1980, and it will help with any insomnia problems the honourable member for St Catharines has.

Let me say to the honourable member for Markham that there are a number of national and subnational financing authorities, including those in a number of states, in a number of jurisdictions and in a number of countries around the world. We think it's an effective way for us to manage the capital investment decisions of the province. We think it will produce a more effective, businesslike approach in separating out longer-term investment decisions. It will all be completely transparent. It will all be seen very clearly by everyone, including the rating agencies. In the world today, there's no way that anybody can do any of these things in a way that isn't seen as being entirely transparent.

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: It's quite simply a means for us to, we think, run the affairs of the province more efficiently than we have in the past.

Mr Cousens: The province of Ontario is doing something that no business can do and no individual can ever do, and that is to move a responsibility from themselves to a separate agency and still say it's not theirs. It's debt. It's transferring debt and responsibility

to another agency. It's now giving this new crown corporation the right to beg, borrow or steal, under the authority of the province of Ontario, to finance any capital expenditure, to adjust its budget accordingly.

Knowing that, let's deal with the specific and get away from all the generalities which cause the Premier to escape a classic example, and that has to do with capital grants to school boards which were promised by the then Liberal government. They promised school boards some \$300 million for the years 1993-94; \$300 million would go in grants from the province to school boards. This grant under this new legislation now becomes a loan, not a grant. How will the schools pay for these supposed grants that are now loans?

Hon Mr Rae: I really think the member is asking questions that I'm sure the Treasurer would be happy to answer when he's here again on Thursday. But I would say to him that again, if you look at other examples in other jurisdictions, there are issues I think here that have to do with sharing, in a sense, the realities of the world. It allows capital expenditures to be amortized over time, which reduces the distortionary impact on the province's expenditures, and the approval system is not being changed in any way.

Mr Cousens: It's downloading at its worst. It's a transferring of responsibility from the province to the school boards. They will end up having to pay the bill in the local tax bill. That's where it's going to have to be. So we can have all the nice words in the Legislature; the bottom line is that the taxpayer in Ontario, the local ratepayer, will pay more.

You know, the record by this government in setting up crown corporations isn't the best. You have Ontario Hydro with its \$34-billion debt. You've got the Workers' Compensation Board with its \$11-billion debt, and that's increasing at \$100 million a month.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Mr Cousens: Give him a fish or something, Mr Speaker. It's feeding time for the Minister of Environment and Energy.

What assurance can you give as Premier that the Ontario Financing Authority and the three other crown corporations are not just a new bureaucracy that will add to the debt and cost taxpayers?

Hon Mr Rae: For a member of the Conservative caucus to rise in his place and somehow talk—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Don't lecture anybody.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Rae: —about Ontario Hydro somehow, an issue which we inherited—and not only did we inherit the mess from that administration. When you look at

Ontario Hydro, when you look at the structure of the decisions that were taken, when you look at the level of debt which was allowed to grow up in that organization, when you look at the top-heavy bureaucratic structure which was implicit in the Big Blue Machine attitude towards the creation of public power in this province in the last 20 years, when you look at the Darlington project, which was supposed to come in at \$4 billion and came in at \$14 billion, there you have a party that, when it talks about Ontario Hydro, should simply hold its head in shame and embarrassment and admit that the New Democratic Party has finally got Ontario Hydro on the road to financial stability and economic prosperity in this province. I rest my case.

1500

The Speaker: New question, the member for Niagara Falls.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. No, I will recognize the member for Niagara Falls for her question. We had left off in the rotation in order to accommodate the leader's question and then the two leader's questions for the third party. We rejoin the rotation over here. I will recognize the member for Niagara Falls.

TOURISM

Ms Margaret H. Harrington (Niagara Falls): My question is to the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. Each year in Canada, we get 500,000 visitors from Japan. Niagara Falls is a very special destination for most of these visitors. In fact, they spend \$25 million in Niagara Falls each year. I don't think they would mind spending a little bit more to help this government at a casino.

The Japanese market is expected to expand greatly in the near future, following the opening of the new Osaka International Airport next summer. As to our major hotels in Niagara Falls, 50% of their business is estimated to be from Japan. This morning, I spoke to Mr Tony Zappitelli, who owns the Sheraton Fallsview. He and other tourism operators have been to Japan this year; in fact, have been to the Tourism Ontario Tokyo office and conducted meetings there.

This office is scheduled to close on July 30. Madam Minister, this closure could be interpreted in Japanese culture as a sign that we are no longer interested in their business. What are you doing to make sure our presence is not diminished but in fact enhanced in Tokyo?

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I'd like to begin my response by expressing a very sincere thanks to the staff of the Tokyo office for the fine work they've done on behalf of Ontario while they've been there.

I'd like to point out, however, that times change. Of course, fiscal times change, and so do many other things. I believe that we've now, thanks in part to the

work of the staff of the Tokyo office, achieved mature relationships with the people of Japan, with the businesses, the governments of Japan. I believe we've now also achieved a very sophisticated level of technology to continue business relationships with countries like Japan.

I believe we also have developed now a tremendous base of experience as a government of the province of Ontario in dealing with that country. I think we are now clearly in a position of being able to consolidate not only the expenditure of taxpayers' funds in promoting tourism to a country like Japan and to its wonderful people, but also to be able to consolidate marketing functions much better from the city of Toronto, to be able to establish the strong partnerships with governments, the federal government through Tourism Canada, with the private sector, with airlines, with travel companies, as well as to be able to better focus on the kind of marketing plans we can make through targeting sales calls and participating in marketplaces all around in the places they exist.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The time for oral questions has expired.

Pursuant to standing order 34(a), the member for Renfrew North has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Health concerning an expenditure control plan on health services in Ontario. This matter will be debated today at 6 pm.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTIONS

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move that the following substitutions be made to the membership of the following standing committees:

On the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, Mr Lessard for Mr Ferguson; on the standing committee on general government, Mr Grandmaître for Mr Sola; on the standing committee on government agencies, Mr Curling for Mr Grandmaître; and on the standing committee on regulations and private bills, Mr O'Neil (Quinte) for Mr Sola.

REFERRAL OF BILL 7

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I seek consent to move a motion that would change an order of the House referring Bill 7 to the standing committee on resources development, changing that to the standing committee on general government.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Do we have unanimous agreement? Agreed.

Hon Mr Charlton: I move that the order of the House dated May 12, 1993, referring Bill 7, An Act to amend certain Acts related to Municipalities concerning Waste Management to the standing committee on resources development be rescinded and that Bill 7 be

ordered referred to the standing committee on general government.

The Speaker: Shall the motion carry? Carried.

PETITIONS

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the members of the provincial Parliament re Bill 38, an amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act to permit wide-open Sunday shopping and eliminate Sunday as a legal holiday.

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38. We believe that this bill defies God's laws, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work, and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man but dates from God's creation, and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people, both physically and spiritually. We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

I've affixed my signature.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario:

"Whereas the NDP government has proposed, without consultation with the municipalities to be affected, conditions to reduce the provision of GO Transit services to Halton-area municipalities; and

"Whereas these service reductions have been proposed arbitrarily without further considering their impact on off-peak employment and the social, education and recreational travel needs of Halton residents, especially the unemployed, seniors, the physically challenged and those on fixed incomes; and

"Whereas these service reductions will have profound, far-reaching negative impacts on current, set-in-place municipal budgets and subsequently catch-up budgeting,

"We, the following undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That Premier Bob Rae and his Transportation minister undertake to immediately review their decision of April 23 with respect to full GO Transit services to Burlington and Halton regions."

There are about 2,000 signatures, and I have affixed my signature in support as well.

VEHICLE LICENSING OFFICE

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas we, the residents of the Jane and Finch community, in accordance with the tenants in Norfinch Plaza, located in the riding of Yorkview, agree that a

motor vehicle licensing office would benefit our community;

"We, the undersigned, request that the Ministry of Transportation grant permission to establish a new motor vehicle licensing office in the Norfinch Plaza."

I sign the petition, Mr Speaker, and I thank you very much.

VIOLENCE

Mr John C. Cleary (Cornwall): I have a petition signed by 37 residents of eastern Ontario:

"The undersigned humbly pray and call upon Parliament to accept legislation designed to eliminate violence against women and children; encourage and support women to report incidents of assault or abuse; provide assistance and support for women reporting assault and abuse; provide relief and support to women and mothers to protect their children; emphasize the need for abusers' rehabilitation; concentrate special efforts on the training of police, lawyers, court workers and judges to become knowledgeable about women and child abuse, and to focus public attention on the very importance of the long-ignored problem."

I have also signed this petition.

1510

GAMBLING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth of crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

That's signed by 44 signatures, and I'll affix my name to it.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers, and since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I do not affix my name to this petition.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I have a petition in hand today signed by over 70 constituents of mine from the Kincardine area who are expressing concerns about the type of material which has been generated from the Toronto board of education with respect to the teaching of homosexuality and any homosexual counselling, and I am pleased to present this to the Legislative Assembly today.

I affix, as is required by standing orders, my name to the petition.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition signed by, I believe, virtually all the unionized employees of the Ministry of Natural Resources in my area:

"To the Honourable Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and Grenville, members of OPSEU Local 441, employed with the Ministry of Natural Resources in Brockville, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it, and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I have affixed my name in support of the petition.

GAMBLING

Mr Dennis Drainville (Victoria-Haliburton): I add this petition to the thousands of people who say no to casino gambling in the province:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activities invariably attract criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I'm very proud to affix my signature to this, and I enjoin this upon every member in the House: Say no to casino gambling.

ANIMALS FOR RESEARCH

Mr Derek Fletcher (Guelph): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the NDP, when in opposition, introduced a private member's bill which would ban the use of lost, stray and abandoned animals from Ontario's municipal pounds for the purpose of experimentation; and

"Whereas a number of Ontario municipalities have banned the sale of pound animals for research and have requested that the government amend the Animals for Research Act to end this practice; and

"Whereas the 1,800 cats and dogs from Ontario pounds annually used in research represent less than one tenth of 1% of the total number of all animals used in research,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to declare an immediate moratorium on the sale and use of municipal pound animals for the purposes of research and, further, that the Minister of Agriculture and Food be directed to prepare amendments to the Animals for Research Act to permanently prohibit the sale and use of pound animals for research."

I affix my name.

CLOSURE OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Mrs Joan M. Fawcett (Northumberland): I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly from the municipal council of the corporation of the township of Stephen.

"Whereas on Friday, April 23, 1993, the government of Ontario presented Ontario's expenditure control plan, which included plans to close Centralia College of Agricultural Technology; and

"Whereas such plans were made impulsively without local consultation and with unfair disregard to the impact on the local community and the broader agricultural sector,

"The council of the corporation of the township of Stephen hereby petition the government of Ontario to reverse their decision to close Centralia College and associated facilities and to conduct a comprehensive public review to determine what expenditure controls are necessary and appropriate for agriculture."

GAMBLING

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling...; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I have affixed my name to this petition, which is signed by a number of constituents from Rosemont, Alliston, Loretto, Mansfield, Everett, Baxter and RR 1, Orangeville.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): I have a petition asking for the withdrawal of Bill 164, the Insurance Act, from a number of residents in the Midland-Penetang area.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

This is a group of signatures from Scarborough, Ajax, Toronto and other places which join some 15,000 others and members of labour groups, business groups and others in supporting Bruce A.

GAMBLING

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I support this petition and will sign it.

1520

GRAVENHURST OPERA HOUSE

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): I have another petition today from the people of the Gravenhurst area requesting that the government provide full funding for the restoration of the opera house that was closed earlier this year by the Ministry of Labour.

GAMBLING

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome. Canadian Foundation of Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated

with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I affix my signature.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have another petition with respect to casino gambling and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I support this petition as well and have affixed my signature to it.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

TENANTS AND LANDLORDS PROTECTION ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LA PROTECTION DES LOCATAIRES ET DES LOCATEURS

On motion by Mr Runciman, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 20, An Act to protect the Persons, Property and Rights of Tenants and Landlords / Loi visant à protéger la personne, les biens et les droits des locataires et des locuteurs.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Introduction of bills.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): On a point of order,

Mr Speaker: There ought to be a chance for a brief explanation, sir.

The Deputy Speaker: Please go ahead.

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I thank the House leader in the official opposition for his timely intervention.

The bill provides a mechanism for the speedy eviction of tenants who have been convicted of certain narcotics offences committed in connection with the rented premises.

TOWN OF GRAVENHURST ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Waters, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the Town of Gravenhurst.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Do you wish to make any comments?

Mr Daniel Waters (Muskoka-Georgian Bay): No, thank you, Mr Speaker.

CRUICKSHANK ELDERLY PERSONS CENTRE ACT, 1993

On a motion by Mrs MacKinnon, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr88, An Act respecting the Cruickshank Elderly Persons Centre.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RYERSON POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE

LA RYERSON POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

Mr Gary Wilson moved third reading of Bill 1, An Act to amend The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977 and the University Foundations Act, 1992 \ Loi modifiant la loi intitulée The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977 et la Loi de 1992 sur les fondations universitaires.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Do you have any comments? Do you want to debate?

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Just a brief comment and that's to say I pored over the record of yesterday's debate in the House and I think it's fair to say that there was a wide-ranging discussion of the change in name from the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute to Ryerson Polytechnic University. I think it's also fair to say that it's considered to be something all members in the House support and I look forward to hearing the debate on the third reading.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any questions or comments on Mr Wilson's debate? Is there any further debate?

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): My sweatshirt may give you some indication as to whether I stand in support of this bill. It's with great pride that

I'm wearing a sweatshirt hot off the press. It reads, "Ryerson Polytechnic University," and obviously I lend my wholehearted support to this bill.

I presented the reasons for that yesterday but, very briefly, this is but a step in the natural evolution of Ryerson. It began some 45 years ago and has culminated today in this House, and then ultimately with royal assent, by the passage of this bill which will enable Ryerson to grant university degrees. It will enable it to provide education towards post-graduate degrees and enable it to conduct further research.

The only real difference, as I outlined yesterday, between Ryerson and other universities in this province is found within an inequity in fact, and that is the funding which it receives. Ryerson students are at present effectively penalized to the tune of 10% vis-à-vis their other university counterparts.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate President Grier, members of the administration, faculty and the students at Ryerson. I hope they will spend some time luxuriating in this moment and in the realization that they will be recognized, as they should have been for quite some time, as a full-fledged university with all the inherent rights in that capacity.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any questions or comments? Further debate.

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): It gives me a great deal of pleasure and in fact it's an honour to be speaking today in support of Bill 1, An Act to amend The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977 and the University Foundations Act, 1992.

I'm going to begin on a personal note, and that is that Ryerson has been a very important academic institution in this province. Its graduates have gone on from being educated in the city of Toronto in the province of Ontario to make tremendous contributions not only in our own province and in our country but around the world.

It's become one of the most renowned institutions, I think, and it goes back to its very humble beginning. Its very humble beginning, for those of us who grew up in this city, began in 1948, certainly before the time I went on to university, but at a time when our parents were extremely proud that in fact we were going to have an institute that recognized the importance of the trades, people who worked with their hands, people who had to go on in technical education to, I think, achieve in the eyes of the public of the day—certainly my father was very much involved—recognition of the contribution that they make and the kind of education that they needed, many of them going to school in the daytime and in the evening and working in what we would call placements in industry and in the business community in order to achieve the practical work; in fact, to receive their university degree. At that time it wasn't referred to

as a university degree, but it was clearly an institute of higher learning meeting the practical demands of the time.

Mr Speaker, if I can talk about today's world and the young people and their hopes and their dreams, we need many more institutions like Ryerson, which never forgets its roots, and that is that our young people need that practical training to meet the requirements for the jobs of tomorrow. In fact, at this time in the history of our country, in the history of North America, as we take a look at the need of Canada to be internationally competitive, we know that the engines that we've relied on in the past, the engines that drove this economy, that refer to the need to promote and mine our natural resources—I suppose the resources beneath our feet would be a good way of establishing a recognition of those resources, whether it be mining or fishing or agriculture. The resources of tomorrow will in fact rely on the resources between our ears and the practical application of those resources.

Therefore, it's with pride today that we note and acknowledge and support the natural evolution of Ryerson: the institute of technology, as it was established in 1948, to its degree-promoting or recognition of university degrees in 1971, which of course now we know they've been doing for some 22 years, looking at some 28 designations, I think, and moving forward just last year when they were given, according to the University Foundation Act, the right to raise funds for their university, as is every other university, including the one in the middle of my riding, the University of Western Ontario.

In fact, this is an evolution, and now the students, upon the completion of the debate of this bill and the royal assent of this particular piece of legislation, will in another week or so be able to graduate from Ryerson University. That's extremely important to them, I think; in fact, it's something that's important probably in three respects. First of all, they've been doing the work anyway. Secondly, the institute right now receives less funding than the other universities, and in fact they are doing the same kinds of work. Many other universities have moved towards the direction of Ryerson, in fact, in promoting hands-on training not only in institutions in cooperation with the private industry in this country and this province but in institutions around the world.

So I can say now that they will achieve, over a period of time, which I think is extremely responsible on their part—I think it's about 10% less funding they get per student at this point in time. They'll phase that in over the next few years. I think that's extremely practical and responsible.

So all I can say is that it's an exciting time. It will be a historic day for Ryerson, and many of us are there to congratulate President Grier. I've had the opportunity and the privilege of visiting the institution in the last

five years more often than before, and I can say that the students are receiving a wonderful education with a tremendous staff and support group and that they are probably on the leading edge in some technology.

I was at the Rogers-supported telecommunications and journalism department. I probably haven't said the name right and I apologize for that, but it was a very exciting addition to the college, supported with private funds. I should tell you the letters that we have received from the private sector and report, because many of these persons are involved because they have been friends of Ryerson over the years.

My staff tell me that the chief executive officer of Maclean Hunter is a member of the Ryerson board, the chairman of the Eaton Foundation, vice-president of Bell and the Live Entertainment Corp of Canada, just to name a few. All of these people who have taken the time to write to us to tell us about their support, to encourage us as we move in a direction that could have been criticized, which is always easier to do, through misunderstanding, have come forward and given us all kinds of reasons to support the university and I think at the same time have pledged their ongoing support, which I think is extremely important.

So Ontario's first polytechnic university will be in need of the same kind of support of the other institutions. I just want to take a couple of minutes to talk about that. We know more recently that the universities have not, in my view, been given the priority that they ought to be given and the resources that we establish here in the province of Ontario and support through taxpayers' money in that the young people that are attending our universities are not getting the same quality of education as the young people even a decade ago in that we have very large classes, we have too many tutorials, we don't have the kind of equipment that we need.

We know that our young people right now are asking themselves whether or not they're going to be able to support the universities in the same way that they have in the past as graduates as we ask them, through voluntary contributions, to support what they were privileged to get.

I never, in all the years that I've worked in education, have had a more disillusioned group of young people. Part of it has to do with the lack of support for our colleges and universities at a time when we're asking them to do more in helping us become even more competitive in the future because of the demands as we look at this global economy.

So I can say right now that the government of the day should take a look at its priorities. As we take a look at the department of colleges and universities in the more recent document, Ontario's Expenditure Control Plan, April 1993, we take a look at a restructuring allocation being reduced from \$56 million to \$25

million, a saving of some \$31 million, at this point in time, Mr Speaker, we are looking for savings, but I have to tell you that this is the kind of thing that should have been looked at over a long period of time. Just like the restructuring of this university with regard to giving it more money per student is going to be phased in, this is the kind of thing that should have been phased in.

There are in fact other departments of government that are less important than this particular department of government, meaning the Ministry of Education and Training, where there could have been savings that would not have affected the lives of young people and the future of this country. There is all kinds of bureaucracy in government that has nothing to do with front-line students and front-line teachers that could have been slashed, but instead we're looking at the very core of our colleges and universities: restructuring allocation and the other one, base operating grant adjustments, some \$22 million.

There isn't a soul in this House that believes that those are the kinds of cuts that we should be looking at in our colleges and universities rather than looking at the ultimate in waste that this government could have found instead. I'm not saying that we don't have to take a look at our budgets, that we have to get rid of our deficits, get rid of our debt; I agree with that. But to ask our colleges and our universities and our education training institutions to take these kinds of reductions in the next few weeks and months is absolutely irresponsible. They could definitely be looking elsewhere, and we have given them many other alternatives. So I'm going to put that on the record because I believe strongly in it.

Just to let you know how the young people are feeling, the colleges around Ontario right now are sending out a letter. They're talking about, "You have been accepted after your hard work." Our young people have done what we told them to do: stay in school, get a good education, work hard. Many of them have stayed in their secondary schools longer, have taken more courses than ever before, to get the kind of requirements to get into our colleges and our universities. Ryerson is no exception to this; there's a tremendous competition to get in there. Then they get a letter saying, "Yes, you finally have been accepted, on a conditional basis, pending clarification of the college's financial circumstances by the Ministry of Education and Training for the province of Ontario."

All I can say is I'm reading a letter that will be sent, if it hasn't already been sent, to the students who have been accepted at Fanshawe College in London. I think for the first time they're not only disillusioned now about getting jobs; they're disillusioned about even being accepted into our colleges and universities after they have met the toughest requirements. Mr Speaker, this is the kind of atmosphere in which our colleges and

universities are working, and I know and you know and so do the members of this government know that there are other places that we could be looking for cuts, not in the front lines when it comes to the education of our young people.

1540

My best advice to this government is to phase these kinds of cuts in over a period of time. We'll find out what happens tomorrow with regard to the budget. It's not new information. They certainly have had it. The colleges and universities have said it themselves. If we're looking at some kind of a social plan to take a look at cuts, I can tell you right now, you're cutting in the wrong place.

I'd like to end on another piece of advice to the government, because I'm sure they read the Hansards every day. This is with regard to the funding of our students, as we take a look at the tuition fees and as we take a look at moving from the grants program to a program that doesn't recognize the importance of grants but only recognizes the importance of loans. I think there should have been a better balance. Something also—

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): This speech was given by Mr Tilson yesterday.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Tilson has learned, and so have some of the Liberals learned, that you don't just cut something in the month of April. That's what happened. You don't change the name of the game in March and April when young people are making their plans now for a year from now. We've taught them to plan and to set their goals and to make sure that they work over a number of years so they'll have the proper kind of finances to support themselves, and then we come out with this kind of stuff in the month of March—total disillusionment and bad management, I must say.

In fact, if you're going to ask them to pay more, you should be introducing some kind of an income-contingent loan repayment plan, because young people do want to pay back for what they have achieved and what they've gained as a result of the tremendous support system in this province.

I'm here to speak on the Ryerson legislation and to say that Ontario's first polytechnic university, I believe, will go on in the history of this province to support the kind of training for our young people that is necessary, certainly in the past, and in the future. I hope they never forget their roots, because the kind of thing they did in 19—I've got the year wrong here; anyway—

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): It was 1948.

Mrs Cunningham: Was it 1948? I hate to say that, because I remember my father telling me about this at the dinner table. But the kind of things they did in

1948, I think, were just as important to the success of this province as what they'll be expected to do in the future.

It's been a privilege for me to have this portfolio and to be invited to that outstanding educational institution from time to time. I look forward to working with them in the future, and I wish them the absolute best of luck on graduation day when that first class of graduates from Ryerson University graduate. Thank you for this opportunity.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions or comments? Any further debate? If not, the parliamentary assistant.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm pleased that we have continued in the general support for the change that Bill 1 represents.

I do want to say that in looking over the remarks of the members, including my own, the impression could be that this is simply a change in name, but in fact Bill 1, when it is passed, represents a change in status for Ryerson, that it will now be a degree-granting institution. With that, I close the debate.

The Deputy Speaker: Mr Wilson moves third reading of Bill 1, An Act to amend The Ryerson Polytechnical Institute Act, 1977 and the University Foundations Act, 1992. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAYS
AMENDMENT ACT (SUNDAY SHOPPING), 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LES JOURS FÉRIÉS

DANS LE COMMERCE DE DÉTAIL
(OUVERTURE DES COMMERCE LE DIMANCHE)

Mr Christopherson moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping / Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jours fériés dans le commerce de détail en ce qui concerne l'ouverture des commerces le dimanche.

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General): This legislation amends the act by allowing stores to open on Sundays, with the exception of Easter Sunday, which has been added to the list of existing enumerated holidays.

Bill 38 simplifies the Retail Business Holidays Act. We've eliminated uncertainties by making it abundantly clear that all retailers, without exception, have the right to choose whether or not they wish to open or not open for business on Sundays.

Retail lessees and franchisees are ensured that the protection against having to open on Sundays currently afforded them under the act will be extended to Sundays, even though Sunday will no longer be a holiday under the act. In turn, retail workers are guaranteed the

nine holidays specified under the Retail Business Holidays Act, and they are protected under the Employment Standards Act from being forced to work on Sundays.

By making Sunday retail business openings possible across the board, we've provided the most equitable treatment for all retail businesses. This legislation creates a level playing field while ensuring retail workers' rights.

We've also made explicit the nine holidays on which most retail businesses must be closed. These are January 1, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and December 26. On those days, no members of the public may be admitted to a retail business, nor may goods and services be sold or offered for sale by retailers.

The Retail Business Holidays Act sets out certain limited exemptions to this requirement. In addition, the government is also ensuring that the amendments preserve the right of municipalities to pass tourism bylaws permitting retail activity on those holidays during which most retailers would otherwise be required to close.

We believe that while it is important that these days be preserved as pause days, the legitimate interests of tourism must be addressed, and municipalities following provincial criteria are in the best position to do this.

During the last 10 months, we have had the opportunity to test public and business response. The results have been mostly positive. Once Bill 38 becomes law, it will be retroactive to its date of introduction, that is, June 3, 1992.

The principles behind Bill 38 are already at work. The bill meets the needs of consumers, the needs of business and, together with the Employment Standards Act, meets the needs of retail workers. It is working because Ontarians have wanted to simplify the law to eliminate uncertainties.

Ever since the Retail Business Holidays Act was proclaimed in January 1976, previous governments have proposed, debated and passed numerous amendments to the act. Cabinet committees agonized during each set of public hearings, and the Legislature debated the interests of the public and business. In each case, each successive change fell short of the equitable legislation that was needed.

To address the issue of retail businesses that was not dealt with in the Lord's Day Act (Canada), 1906 or the Lord's Day (Ontario) Act, 1943, the Retail Business Holidays Act, 1976, established a province-wide regime. The act required most stores to close on Sundays and other enumerated holidays unless specifically exempt from the closing provisions of the legislation and unless a municipal bylaw, essential for the maintenance or

development of a tourist industry, had been passed permitting stores to open.

In February 1987, after several court challenges to the Retail Business Holidays Act, an all-party select committee on retail stores hours was formed and held 23 days of public hearings. In June 1987, the Ontario Legislature unanimously amended the Retail Business Holidays Act to allow the opening of book stores and art galleries, with restrictions on their size and number of employees.

In February 1989, the legislation was extensively amended to give municipalities broad powers to regulate retail shopping on holidays. Municipalities could pass bylaws either exempting stores from closing provisions of the legislation or requiring stores to close in circumstances where the legislation would have permitted them to open. To encourage public consultation, the legislation prescribed a scheme of notice to the public and the holding of a public meeting prior to the passage of any such bylaw.

1550

A provision was included in the amended legislation permitting retailers who practise their religion on a day other than Sunday to close their stores on that day and to open on Sunday. This replaced the provision in the original legislation which permitted retailers to close their stores on Saturday and to open on Sunday, subject to certain limitations as to store size and the number of employees working on Sunday. Drugstores were limited to size, and the custom of roping off floor areas in stores on Sunday in order to comply with statutory requirements was prohibited.

The amendments also provided for increased maximum fines and prompted an amendment to the Employment Standards Act which permitted retail workers to refuse unreasonable Sunday work and which imposed an arbitral process upon employers and employees who could not agree on the matter.

In June 1991, Bill 115, the Retail Business Establishments Statute Law Amendment Act, was brought forward for first reading and in December of that year it was proclaimed. It allows Sunday retailing in December before Christmas, protects the rights of retail workers and creates the tourism exemption.

The discretion of municipalities to regulate in the area of retail holiday closing was replaced with an authority still vested in the municipality to exempt retail businesses from the Sunday and holiday closing requirements for the purpose of maintaining or developing tourism. Municipalities may pass such bylaws only where tourism criteria, established in regulations made under the legislation, are met. Such bylaws may be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. The amendments also set out minimum fines for contraventions of the legislation.

The Employment Standards Act was amended at the same time to provide most retail workers with an absolute right to refuse Sunday or holiday work and by providing most retail workers with 36 consecutive hours of rest in every seven-day period.

Experience and a recent change in public attitudes have combined to persuade the government that many people want the opportunity to shop on Sunday and are increasingly impatient of rules and regulations that prevent them from doing so.

It's been a slow and arduous journey. Ontarians wanted a clear direction, and this government has crafted the most equitable resolution to the issue. In June of last year, Bill 38, An Act to amend the Retail Business Holidays Act in respect of Sunday Shopping, was moved first reading in the Legislature. Today, we move second reading. The final step will be a free vote in this Legislature to determine final passage of Bill 38.

I want to remind the members of a number of factors that played a significant part in the development and introduction of Bill 38.

First, it is clear that people in Ontario want the right to shop on Sundays. The government has carefully monitored public sentiment in this regard, and it is obvious that public opinion is in favour of Sunday retailing over the past months. This bill reflects the wishes of a clear majority of the residents of Ontario.

Second, this decision is assisting in Ontario's economic renewal. The government recognizes that, by itself, Sunday shopping is not a solution to economic problems. However, such retailing will go some way to countering the onerous effect of the goods and services tax and federal policies affecting the value of the Canadian dollar. The government's decision has been of particular assistance in addressing the economic impact on Ontario's border communities of cross-border shopping.

Third, there are substantial protections in the Employment Standards Act for retail workers who choose not to work on Sundays. That legislation guarantees most retail workers the absolute right to refuse Sunday work. The law also guarantees that most retail workers will receive 36 consecutive hours of rest in every seven-day period. The Ministry of Labour has programs in effect to enforce these provisions.

This government has always maintained its commitment to protect the rights of retail employees who work on Sunday. Two years ago, we improved the Employment Standards Act to give retail workers the absolute right to refuse work on Sundays and holidays and to 36 hours weekly rest.

We also established a committee to advise on the impact of Sunday shopping, which reported back to my colleague, the Honourable Bob Mackenzie, Minister of Labour, in February of this year. This committee, made

up of representatives from large employers in the retail sector, unions, municipalities and small business, worked diligently to create a document containing a number of recommendations.

In order to further protect the rights of these employees, the Ministry of Labour is looking at steps to ensure that the existing Employment Standards Act provisions are respected by retailers.

The government will also ensure that employers found in violation of these provisions are required to post a notice in the workplace advising all employees that the act has been violated. This measure is consistent with provisions in other labour statutes. In addition, there will be posting of the rights of workers in the language of the workplace.

Finally, the government will initiate a committee whose purpose will be to further explore the impact of Sunday shopping, to forward suggestions on common closings on statutory holidays, to continue to monitor the Employment Standards Act and make further recommendations as necessary.

At all times, and in especially these times of economic renewal, we have to govern with the public interest in mind and our policies must be responsive to changing attitudes. We have carefully monitored public and business reaction to Bill 38. We are confident that this amendment to the Retail Business Holidays Act does respond effectively to changing public attitudes and meets the needs of consumers and the needs of business in our province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr Gilles E. Morin): Questions or comments? The member for Etobicoke West, if you'd take your seat.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): I was interested in hearing a couple of items. Firstly, it took nearly 25 minutes to say, "I'm sorry." That was the length of that particular dissertation from the minister.

The other interesting point is, they're going to form a committee to measure the impact of Sunday shopping. That's much like forming a committee to close the barn door after the horse is gone. What's the point? Sunday shopping is in place. It's going to be in place. It's been in place. Forming a committee is nothing but a small, little—it's hard to even imagine what you could say would be significant to the people who are opposed to Sunday shopping after—

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): "Sop," I think, is the word.

Mr Stockwell: A sop for the public who oppose Sunday shopping, particularly since you were the government, you were the party that was in favour of the common pause day. When I go on to speak, I will go through the list of promises, policy decisions and processes that were put in place to ensure a common pause day.

You're talking about worker protection for not working on Sunday. When you were in opposition, your party was very clear: There was no legislation that could be instituted that could protect people from working on Sunday. Your party said very clearly during the election, "There isn't any possible legislation that could be drafted that could protect people from working on Sunday." Now you're telling me you're going to draft legislation to protect people who don't want to work on Sunday from working on Sunday. Tell me exactly what has changed your mind, that now you can draft legislation that was virtually impossible to draft three or four short years ago.

This is the most obvious about-face this government has taken. In a lot of respects, I feel sorry for the ex-minister, the Solicitor General. He got hung out to dry on this. He looked like a sap who was put up and melted down in public on this issue, because the Premier backed down and broke one of the most fundamental promises you people have ever made.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): I too am looking forward to debating this particular issue. Those who have followed my views on this will know that I have been opposed to Sunday shopping, and there are a number of reasons why I'm opposed to Sunday shopping. Those views still stand, and I think all of the constituents who have visited my office and perhaps have phoned me to clarify and verify their opinions on Sunday shopping will substantiate my decision to stand opposed to this.

I think family is a very important aspect in society. I think family values play a large role in how our communities act and behave, and I don't think Sunday shopping and this particular bill will help matters in terms of communities and where families go from there.

Families have met on a regular basis—I know in my community, the Italian community, families have met on a regular basis every Sunday for lunch. They meet with their sons and their daughters and they have a chance to talk. Now, ever since we have allowed Sunday shopping to take place, I've had a number of calls. Those calls are very adamant. They claim that they're no longer able to meet with their families, their sons, their daughters, because they are being forced to work. I thought this bill would protect the workers. I'd like to ask this question at this particular time: Will this bill help workers and help those families and let them meet on a regular basis on Sundays? I don't know whether it will.

1600

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): I, like a number of members of our caucus, am going to have a few things to say on this bill. I suspect that most of us are going to be supportive of the legislation. I think our primary desire is to get this bill over with, but the reason I think it's such an important debate and why so many members are going to be participating in it is not

the fact that we're going to see some NDP members voting against it—and I commend my friend the member for Yorkview for continuing to have the convictions that his party had—but the fact that this debate on Sunday shopping and this marvellous 180-degree turn of the socialist party of Ontario, the New Democrats of Ontario, really is something to behold.

It goes beyond Sunday shopping. It goes into the elimination of collective bargaining in the public sector, it goes into the cutbacks and it goes into virtually everything that Bob Rae has done, including the garbage mess that he's created in the greater Toronto area.

When you really think about it, Bob Rae is the Premier whom Bob Rae used to warn us about. He sat in a chair over here and he stood in a place over here and warned us about so many things that government was doing that had to be opposed and had to be resisted and had to be fought. Now Bob Rae in power simply chooses a principle that is in no way consistent with the principles that he used to preach as a political leader and not a government leader.

It's with a little bit of sadness, at least in that regard, that we undertake this debate. Having heard for years and years that the policy on Sunday shopping had to change, he resisted in opposition and then tried to resist in government. I say, thank God he saw the light. Let's get the bill passed, but let's review the government's record as we do that.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): In these very brief two minutes that I have to voice some views on this particular subject, the issue of Sunday shopping, while I understand what is happening here today, while I understand the pressures that we face in permitting Sunday shopping, while I understand the campaigns that were launched on all sides of this issue, predominantly and primarily the campaigns were launched in favour of Sunday shopping, in favour of opening the doors on Sunday, in favour of essentially asking people to work on a day when they could be sharing some time with their families and friends.

I guess the campaign that strikes at the heart of this issue more than anything else is the campaign that was essentially undertaken by the Toronto Sun, with the assistance, I may add, of both our opposition parties here today, the Liberal and the Conservative parties.

I can remember the constant bombardment of the debate and the pages within those media being filled with the pro-let's-work-on-Sunday, the pro-let's-do-some-shopping-on-Sunday. I can remember the incredible pressures that the campaign that came from those sources have had on this particular issue and the manipulation that has happened as a result of all of that. In that way, I can understand the public mood and where the public has moved on this.

However, I regret to say here today that despite all of

that I am not going to be supporting this bill, because I don't believe it's the right way to go.

The Deputy Speaker: Minister, you have two minutes.

Hon Mr Christopherson: I want to thank the members for Downsview, Yorkview, York Centre and Etobicoke West, who took a moment to respond to my comments.

Let me first say to all members in the House that I think we all appreciate the history of this particular issue and the fact that every party that's been in government in this province has struggled with this particular issue, trying to find exactly the right formula that would balance the needs and rights of everyone.

Quite frankly, it's been an evolution of public opinion that leads us to the point where today we have the kind of legislation we have in front of us. I dare say to you, Mr Speaker, that regardless of who the party was that's in power, this is where the public is on this issue and this is where any government of the day would have to be.

Let me just point out also the comments from my colleague the member for Etobicoke West, from the Tory party of course, who has all the simplistic answers to everything—this is the party that would deal with the social contract negotiations through bang, bang, bang—and who was proceeding to heckle during the comments of the committee that's being struck to continue to monitor this.

This government continues to and will always place great emphasis and priority on the rights of workers. We will continue to monitor this legislation with a view to improving it in any way we can to ensure that the rights of workers are being met as outlined in the legislation.

Let me also say, while I'm on my feet, that I think it says a lot about this government and about this Premier, recognizing the morality of this issue and how tough it is, that he offered up to this caucus, to this government, the free vote that will happen on this particular bill and that was a recognition of the importance.

Lastly, let me just quote in part from the Employment Standards Act:

"No employer or person acting on behalf of an employer shall dismiss, threaten to dismiss, discipline, suspend, lay off, intimidate, coerce or impose a penalty on an employee because the employee has refused or attempted to refuse an assignment of work on Sunday."

The Deputy Speaker: Your time has expired, Minister. Any further debate?

Mr Robert Chiarelli (Ottawa West): I'm not sure I'm pleased to enter into this debate, a debate that probably should have taken place quite some time ago. Bill 38 was introduced for first reading on June 3, 1992, and is only now coming forward for second reading debate.

Let's be perfectly clear. Bill 38 doesn't create wide-open Sunday shopping. Bill 38 creates wide-wide-wide-open Sunday shopping, so wide that you could drive a truck through it, literally. At 6 o'clock on a Sunday morning, a tractor-trailer from President's Choice can roll into a Loblaws superstore, unload its produce and merchandise, and that Loblaws superstore can remain open on that Sunday from 8 am until 8 pm. Some people in this House support that type of legislation, some people are opposed to it, but let's be perfectly clear what the legislation in fact does.

The debate, as I said, is long overdue. We should put this issue to rest that has bedevilled legislatures and the courts for the whole history of the province. In fact, I will be referring to a document later, Current Issue Paper 119, prepared by the legislative researcher Susan Swift, who is a lawyer with that particular department. It basically reviews the whole history of this issue and indicates how back in the beginning, in 1845, this legislation started as legislation with a religious intent. Over the years, the Legislature and the courts have developed a law and a legislation so that it has a secular intent. That's really where we're ending up with Bill 38, which was introduced last June.

I do want to make a comment on the issue of this being a free vote. As we know, this is the first time the government introduced any matter for a free vote. It did not consult with the opposition that it was going to do it. It did not indicate or give any previous warning or notice to the opposition that it would be introducing this type of legislation. So I can say, knowing our opposition caucus here as I do, that we certainly cannot guarantee the passage or the failure of this legislation on behalf of the government, and it is going to have to accept the responsibility for this legislation.

1610

There are significant issues of substance and there are also significant issues of process and procedure, and I'm going to deal with both of these issues intermittently, because sometimes they merge—the process becomes substance—and I think they're very important process issues.

It was good to see, I feel, a very competent Solicitor General debating this issue and introducing it for second reading here today, but we have to keep in mind that this is the third Solicitor General dealing with this legislation in two and a half years.

In that short two and a half years, we had the NDP visit the issue with Mr Farnan as Solicitor General, who introduced Bill 115, which created a common pause day with a tourism exemption. That was given third reading in November 1991.

A mere 180 days later, Bill 38 was introduced by the Honourable A. Pilkey for first reading. It was actually announced by the Premier in a statement in the Legislature. That bill from a second Solicitor General repre-

sented a total, complete flip-flop in legislation in a mere 180 days.

As I said, today we have the third Solicitor General introducing this for second reading, and that's Mr Christopherson. It has lain fallow in the Legislature for close to a year, almost exactly a year.

We still have no indication from the House leader or from the Solicitor General where this legislation will be going after second reading, assuming that the vote carries. We don't know whether it's going to committee of the whole House, we don't know whether it's going to a legislative committee. There has been absolutely no leadership given whatsoever in this place on this issue.

I guess there's one way to describe a lot of things that the NDP does and that is dysfunctional. The DP in the NDP stands for "dysfunctional party." This place has become flip-flop follies on a whole range of issues. I think their secret agenda is to give Ontario chiropractors a lot of business, because every second day the people of Ontario, through statements and actions of this government, are shaking their heads in total disbelief so vigorously that I'm sure the chiropractors are very busy.

The flip-flop mentality of this government as indicated by this legislation is a very serious flaw in this government. Even if we look at the first budget that was introduced, a \$10-billion deficit expressly stated to increase spending in order to fight the recession, it was a budget that created a 14% increase for public servants' wages and benefits. Now the total flip-flop again, which indicates a scorch-and-burn policy of restraint.

What they do is make a mistake, and in order to rectify the mistake, they make another mistake, and that's exactly what they're doing in some aspects of the Sunday shopping legislation.

If we look at another major flip-flop, just by way of an example for about 10 seconds, we had the strongest possible opposition from the Premier, calling the whole issue of gambling and casinos a tax on the poor, and now Ontario is being called the lotto and casino capital of the world.

It wouldn't be so bad if they merely flip-flopped, but when they flip-flop, what they do is make additional mistakes, and the Sunday shopping legislation is one of those examples.

When we look at the Liberal legislation, Bill 113 and Bill 114, that created the municipal local option. I can recall when we went out with the justice committee across the province—very, very extensive, something like 400 submissions—and we went to eight or nine cities across the province. I can recall one opposition member at that time by the name of Mike Farnan. He had this little yellow chicken. He put it on his desk and he would say, "The government is taking the chicken way out," and he said that day after day after day.

I see some grins on the opposition benches, because they remember Mr Farnan when he was in opposition, who then became the Solicitor General to introduce Bill 115, and he is the one who said the Liberal government was taking the chicken way out. Well, we then see the Agenda for People.

Mr Stockwell: The what?

Mr Chiarelli: The litany of broken promises.

But in any case, we again see on Sunday shopping that this government, this party, supports a common pause day, and once again, the first speech from the throne that this government introduced, read from where you're sitting right now, indicated that they will introduce legislation to support a common pause day.

Well, they did. It was Solicitor General Mike Farnan who introduced Bill 115. That bill was passed November 1991, a common pause day with a local tourism exemption. When you remember that this bill after second reading went out for committee hearings across the province, something in the order of 500 submissions, 8 or 10 cities—I've got a list of them here somewhere, which I will refer to in a minute—180 days after Bill 115 was passed, the Premier stands in this Legislature and makes a statement. I'm going to quote the statement from the Premier. This, as I said, was the 3rd of June 1992, 180 days after he supported the enactment of a common pause day with a tourism exemption.

"I have a statement to make about Sunday shopping.

"The cabinet has decided to recommend to the House that we pass legislation to permit retail stores to open for business on Sundays.

"This has not been an easy decision. As this House well knows, I have often stood in my place on both sides of the House to argue in defence of a common pause day on Sunday and restricted access to Sunday store openings.

"Experience, which is always a good teacher, and a change in public attitudes in recent years have combined to persuade me that such legislation, however well intended, is extremely difficult to enforce fairly and runs up against a growing sense that many people want to shop on Sunday and are increasingly impatient of rules and regulations that prevent them from doing so.

"I am not convinced that Sunday shopping on its own will lead to a dramatic increase in jobs or single-handedly stop cross-border shopping. But it is clear that we cannot put a wall up around Ontario and that changing social patterns here and in neighbouring jurisdictions are having a clear impact on the choices and attitudes of Ontarians.

"I want to make it clear that the vote on the legislation, while it has the full support of the cabinet, will be a free vote in the Legislature for my own caucus, of course."

I want to refer to one little phrase in the Premier's statement. He said, "Experience, which is always a good teacher, and a change in public attitudes in recent years, have combined to persuade me..." If he's saying, as the Premier, that a recent change in public attitudes in recent years has persuaded him, why, a mere 180 days earlier, did he sit here supporting his caucus and his Solicitor General on a bill which created a common pause day?

It is because the Premier is incompetent. He permitted the justice committee to criss-cross this province a mere three or four months earlier, listening to submissions basically which disagreed with his legislation, and he has the gall to walk in here and suggest that it's changing attitudes over the last number of years. It was nothing but political expediency, it was political dishonesty, it was ad hoc planning, it was ad hoc policy from a government that does this on virtually every issue that it's involved in, from the environment to fiscal policy to casinos. The government is dysfunctional at every single level, and it starts at the top with Premier Bob.

1620

Bill 115 toured the province the summer of 1991 and the legislation was given third reading, as I indicated, in November of 1991. That's the common pause day bill that this government supported and enacted.

In the summer of 1991 the justice committee visited Collingwood, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, North Bay, Ottawa, Kingston, Peterborough, Windsor, London and Hamilton. Sixteen days of public hearings at great expense to the taxpayer, 448 written submissions, and what did they hear? They heard about cross-border shopping, they heard from municipalities, they heard from students on student employment, they heard on the devastation of the recession.

There was a message that was given in the summer of 1991. The message that was given that summer is the message the Premier got in June of 1992 after, through his incompetence, he let his caucus and his cabinet pass Bill 115, which created a common pause day. Nothing could be more dysfunctional and more irresponsible on the part of a government than what Bob Rae did under those circumstances.

I want to refer to a letter to the editor which appeared in the Brantford Expositor. It talks about Mr Rae's campaign promises. I am going to quote exactly from the letter. It contains language which, if I were saying it, would be unparliamentary, but I believe I have the right to quote a letter to the editor which appears in a public newspaper, the Brantford Expositor, which was published on April 28, 1993. It has to do with the irresponsible flip-flopping of Premier Bob Rae and it's written by a former member of the New Democratic Party, and it says:

"For as long as I can remember I have supported the

New Democratic Party. I have voted for it and promoted its policies. However, after hearing about Bob Rae's social contract I have decided to terminate my support for the NDP. I feel, as many other Ontarians do, that Bob Rae has lied to us and has failed to keep even one of his campaign promises. To put it bluntly, Rae is a charlatan—"

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Premier Rae is the Premier of this province. He deserves respect like all members of this House. I know that you are reading from a text. I know that you'll understand also that you cannot use it to insult somebody else and I would ask you to refrain from doing so.

Mr Chiarelli: Mr Speaker, I will insert the word "blank" wherever that particular word is recited in this particular letter, because I think that a citizen of the province of Ontario, a newspaper is entitled to be quoted in this Legislature. But, Mr Speaker, I will defer to your comment and wherever that four-letter word is in the text I'll use a blank.

"To put it bluntly, Rae is a charlatan. Rae is acting more like a Tory than a New Democrat. I do not feel that Rae, with his conservative, pro-corporate mentality, can even relate to the working man/woman. He is not supportive of the working class. This is shown by his attack upon the middle and lower income classes in the form of higher sales taxes, cutbacks in proactive programs and lack of attempts to tax the corporations and upper class. Rae promised to tax corporations. He [blank]. Rae promised to improve our education system. He [blank]. Rae promised to support proactive social programs. He [blank]. Rae promised to maintain and improve our health care services. He [blank]. Rae promised to build the Ministry of Government Services' new computer centre in Brantford. He [blank].

"Contrary to what many politicians think, voters will no longer support those who trample on their trust. Bob Rae and the NDP are living on borrowed time, for the landslide that put them in power will remove them from power with swift, blinding velocity. I will not support the NDP provincially in the future. Hopefully, all my fellow citizens will do the same. Rae [blank], he [blank], he [blank]."

Those are the words used by Michael Girdlestone, Mr Speaker, which you're saying are unparliamentary.

The government is dysfunctional. Even when it has a good idea or a good policy, it screws it up in implementation or execution, because of either incompetence or ideological fixations.

I want to read some additional Hansard from the second Solicitor General to deal with this issue in less than two and a half years, and that is the Honourable Allan Pilkey. When this Bill 38 was introduced last June, the Premier made the initial statement and then afterwards the Honourable Allan Pilkey made some

comments. I'll just read very briefly: "When the bill is passed, these measures will come into effect retroactive to today. I have also asked officials of my ministry to inform police services across the province of the introduction of these amendments."

We have to understand exactly what that retroactivity does to undermine the credibility of the Legislature, the legislative process. I have here the Orders and Notices, which is a publication of this House indicating the bills which are before it. It indicates that a number of bills are coming up for second reading; for example, second reading on Bill 80, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, which was introduced by the Honourable Bob Mackenzie. Or we have another bill, second reading of Bill 90, An Act to amend the Planning Act and the Municipal Act with respect to Residential Units and Garden Suites. That Bill 90 is the bill which would basically abolish single-family units so that every single-family unit in the province can be created into a duplex.

The point I'm making in how this government is dysfunctional is that if we took Bill 38 as a precedent, and when a bill is introduced for first reading the minister could merely stand up and say, "Okay, this is going to be retroactive and it's effective as of today," even though we haven't even had second reading debate on it, could you imagine what that would do, what would happen if that were a precedent for Bill 90? Today, every single-family unit in the province of Ontario could be duplexed without any reference to legislation, without any reference to enforcement.

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): What bill are you on anyway? You're supposed to be talking about Sunday shopping.

Mr Chiarelli: Mr Cousens says I'm supposed to be talking about Sunday shopping. I am talking about Sunday shopping. I'm talking about the fact it was introduced for first reading last June and it's effective on the ground today without any debate or vote by you, sir. I'm talking about defending your rights as a member of this Legislature, which Bill 38 abrogates. That's what I'm talking about, sir.

Mr Cousens: That's a good point, then. Keep it up. Go after them.

Mr Chiarelli: Thank you. Mr Cousens says, "Keep it up."

A point of privilege was raised today in this Legislature by a colleague of mine, the member for St George-St David, on this very issue of Bill 38 and how it undermines the legislative process. We look at the Orders and Notices paper and we know that what was done to Bill 38 was a very extraordinary process.

You know, Mr Speaker, in your other reality as the member for Victoria-Haliburton, how this type of thing creates cynicism in our community, how it creates the

impression that the whole governmental system, the whole political system is dysfunctional and doesn't work. People are out there and they believe that a bill is introduced, it has second reading, it has some kind of committee process, is reintroduced here for third reading and receives royal assent.

That is not what happened to Bill 38. Bill 38 really is disruptive of the parliamentary principles that you and I know should exist, particularly some reasonable committee process. We know that members in the back benches feel very strongly about that dysfunctional aspect of the New Democratic Party.

1630

If I may, there's another aspect of this Bill 38 which I would describe as dysfunctional, and that has to do with the fact that the Premier stood in this House on June 3, 1992, without any notice, and said that Bill 38, the bill that creates wide-, wide-, wide-open Sunday shopping, will be subject to a free vote. Why this bill? There are people, for example, Mr Speaker, in your other reality as the member for Victoria-Haliburton, who say: Why not a free vote on casinos? Why not a free vote on the advocacy legislation? Why not a free vote on the social contract?

What are the rules in this place that govern how we operate? What are the rules that set principles that mean something to people? The idea of presenting this bill as a free vote, to use Mr Farnan's expression, is the chicken way out. Mr Rae could not convince his caucus. Mr Rae, on Bill 115, did not introduce a free vote. Why not? I think you know as well as anybody: because Bill 115 had significant support in the community, significant support in your caucus and it sounded good—common pause day with a tourism exemption.

Your Premier did not introduce a free vote for Bill 115. He introduced it for Bill 38. Why? Where are the rules? Mr Rae, when he was in opposition, talked about making this place work better. He talked about upgrading the principles upon which we operate, giving more power to backbenchers, more power to committees, getting rid of the cynicism. So we have, on June 3, 1992, the Premier standing up and saying, "Bill 38 will be a free vote." Why? What are the principles upon which that decision was made?

There are all kinds of backbenchers on the government side who know why, because they're going to vote against this legislation and Mr Rae is banking on having enough people from the opposition benches to carry the vote. You and I know that he does not have that guarantee, he does not have that assurance. We've taken the votes in our caucus, and it's a very, very volatile thing. People are softening on this legislation in a number of ways.

This bill may not carry, and yet we have such a dysfunctional government that the Solicitor General in effect has ordered the police departments to enforce

legislation or to cease enforcing Bill 115, which is the legislation of the land at this point in time. So we've had wide-open Sunday shopping for the last year, and we have no legislation to back it up, and the Premier doesn't even have an assurance of a majority government that this bill will pass.

This Premier is a purveyor of chaos and of dysfunction and that's why people are beginning to call it the dysfunctional party. Bill 38 is a primary example. We see no parliamentary reform. We see a cynical use of the free vote without any framework or guidelines for this Legislature on any other issue.

Later on in my debate I want to make some observations on some of the impacts of Bill 38. I particularly want to make some observations about the impact this legislation will have on 6,000 neighbourhood stores across the province. I also want to make some observations on the impact this legislation is going to have on those people in the province who still support a common pause day. I think there are a number of things this government could have done in connection with Bill 38 that took into account some of those impacts. As I said, I'm going to go into those in a bit more detail in a couple of minutes.

I did want to do a short survey of the history of the legislation. As I mentioned earlier, this legislation has moved from being one of religious observance and religious intent to one with a secular intent and secular purposes.

Hon Mr Wildman: I still don't know whether you're in favour of this bill or not. How long have you been speaking? How can you speak this long without saying whether you're in favour of the bill?

Mr Chiarelli: I won't go all the way back, as the Minister of Environment and Energy is suggesting. The Minister of Environment is suggesting that I go all the way back to 1763, the Treaty of Paris, by which France ceded to Britain the land which today comprises the province of Ontario, but I won't go back that far. As far back as I'm going to go is 1845. I'm going to go through this rather quickly, because I think it is very instructive when we look at the dynamics affecting this type of legislation in 1845 versus the dynamics that are affecting this legislation in 1993.

In 1845, An Act to prevent the Profanation of the Lord's Day—commonly called Sunday—in Upper Canada prohibited virtually all activity on Sunday except churchgoing and certain works of necessity and charity. As usual, there were offences. This goes through and lists the whole range of offences.

Bill 38, or the Retail Business Holidays Act, as we will have it after Bill 38 amendments are passed, will still have offences. So in 1845 we had the prohibition; we had the offences. The offences included brawling or using profane language in the streets and other such

things. In 1845, this Act to prevent the Profanation of the Lord's Day also had exceptions. What do we have in the Retail Business Holidays Act today? We have exceptions still. We still have the tourism exemption.

Then in 1845, as usual, we had violations that resulted in the imposition of fines. So the basic structure of the legislation in 1845 was exactly the same as the Retail Business Holidays Act that we will have after Bill 38 is passed, if in fact it's going to be passed.

What we see between 1845 and 1993 is the Legislature of Ontario, the Parliament of Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada and the courts of Ontario playing political and legislative football with this issue. All the way through you have that same framework simply shifting. It's moving in one main direction, towards one main thrust. The direction that it is moving in within that framework is one of moving from what is called the religious intent or religious observance to one of secular intent and secular purpose.

As I said, I'm going to go through some of the process because I'm going to use some of the things that happened historically and relate them very specifically to Bill 115 and Bill 38 as we have it before us today.

What we had after 1845, in 1885, were some amendments that basically tinkered with that particular bill. But in 1900 the law basically was called upon to interpret that particular legislation, An Act to prevent the Profanation of the Lord's Day. In 1903, it went not only to the Supreme Court of Canada but at that time constitutional issues went to the Privy Council of the United Kingdom for the ultimate appeal. In fact, this Lord's Day case went to the Privy Council in 1903, and it was declared to be unconstitutional. We had Bill 114 in 1990 that went to the courts in Ontario and, like this bill, was declared to be unconstitutional.

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So what happened? The legislators went around, they shuffled, they researched and they found ways to deal with it legislatively. Back in 1903 it was turfed right out by the Privy Council, the highest court basically in the Commonwealth. In 1990 we had the highest court in Ontario turf out Bill 114 for a short period of time.

At that time the federal government moved in, resulting in the passage or enactment of the Lord's Day Act in 1906. That basically filled the void, and it in effect gave a type of local option to the provinces, so that the provinces could get back into the field. In fact that's exactly what happened.

So when you think in terms of local option that we talked about, whether it's a local municipal option or whether it's a local option for the tourism exemption, in 1906 the federal Parliament of Canada was creating a local option for the provinces to be able to deal with

this issue, because the Privy Council had determined in effect that only the federal government could operate within that particular area.

Moving quickly along to 1922, we had enacted legislation in 1922 called One Day's Rest in Seven Act. Mr Speaker, you're probably aware of the fact that this legislation still exists today. Ontario enacted the One Day's Rest in Seven Act to deal with the issue of Sunday work for employees of hotels, restaurants or cafés. It provided for at least 24 consecutive hours of rest in every seven days and, whenever possible, on a Sunday. The legislation continues in force today.

Of course, we had the warriors intervening, 1939 to 1945, and Sunday work in industry became very commonplace. It became part of our economy and part of our provincial infrastructure. Then there were a series of minor refinements, if I can put it that way. In 1943 Toronto movie theatres opened on Sunday but only to members of the armed services. This privilege was withdrawn in 1945 after the war.

In 1950 Toronto and Windsor, having each conducted a referendum on the issue and having received a positive response, asked the provincial government to allow all types of sports on Sundays. In response to the request by Toronto and Windsor and in recognition of changing attitudes in society, the Legislature exercised the authority given to it under the federal Lord's Day Act, under the local option, so to speak, to opt out of the prohibition against commercial sports activities, so then it was therefore permitted.

The Legislature amended the Lord's Day Act, Ontario, in 1960 to permit any Sunday concert, recital or other musical performance of an artistic and cultural nature at which an admission fee is charged between the hours of 1:30 and 6 pm, and it had to be produced by a non-profit organization.

There were a number of further amendments and refinements, including getting rid of the Lord Day's Act itself. I'm going quickly through the research paper here and I just want to highlight the major change and the major thrust, which brings me to the point in 1969 where we have a very, very significant historical event in the development of Sunday openings or Sunday observance legislation, and of course that is the law reform commission set up by the Conservative government in 1969.

The Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of the province requested the Ontario Law Reform Commission to undertake a study and review of the Sunday observance legislation in effect in Ontario in all its aspects. The extensive study was to investigate the historical, religious, economic, sociological, legal and comparative background of the law relating to Sunday observance.

It was that commission that was the basis of the

Retail Business Holidays Act as we know it today. There were several significant recommendations that this commission made to the Conservative government of the day.

Probably the most significant recommendation is that "The Ontario legislation providing support for a Sunday pause day should be secular and not religious in both purpose and effect." That was recommendation 3. So we see in 1969 a very significant and clear statement that the province and provincial public opinion were moving away from religious intent, religious observance purposes, to those of secular intent and purposes.

Very briefly, this commission recommended that "Ontario should provide legislative support for a uniform weekly pause day for as many persons as possible." That was recommendation 1. "The uniform weekly pause day should be Sunday." That was recommendation 2. As I mentioned, the purpose and intent should be secular and not religious. That was recommendation 3.

"The legislation should have the dual secular purpose of (a) preserving a quality environment for the pursuit of leisure activities among family and friends; and (b) ensuring that as many persons as possible will be protected from being required to work on Sundays against their will." That was recommendation 4.

There is a whole series of other recommendations which I won't go into but, as I mentioned, that commission was the basis for the Retail Business Holidays Act, which was introduced in 1975 and became law on January 1, 1976. The drafting of that legislation was basically to try to create a secular rather than a religious purpose.

The act was passed by the Legislature and was proclaimed in force on January 1, 1976. It prohibited the carrying on of a retail business on holidays, including Sundays. This general prohibition was subject to several exceptions. We know what they are generally in terms of the sale of drugs, the size of the retail establishment—2,400 square feet—nursery stock, flowers, gardening supplies etc.

But one of the most significant exceptions—and as I mentioned, the initial legislation in 1845 had a general prohibition and it had exceptions, and the Retail Business Holidays Act that was enacted in 1976 was like all the others. It had exceptions. Of course, if a municipality, for tourism purposes, wanted to pass a bylaw permitting Sunday openings, it could do that. What happened between 1976 and 1988, when the government of David Peterson introduced Bill 114, is that we had the so-called tourism exemption under the Retail Business Holidays Act become a de facto local option.

You know that under the Conservative legislation, before the Liberal government came to power, before the NDP government came to power, there was a

tourism exemption that enabled over 100 municipalities to pass bylaws permitting Sunday openings. We know that there were bylaws to permit openings in Ottawa, for example. The Byward Market for a number of years in the early 1980s could open on Sundays. We know that there are other areas—Niagara Falls, Chinatown—and we know that other parts of communities were opened under what was a de facto municipal option.

It was very controversial legislation, and what happened with the Retail Business Holidays Act—even though having what amounted to a de facto municipal local option because there were no guidelines, there were no teeth in the exception that permitted the tourism exemption—people started to assault the legislation legally. As in 1845 and 1903, there were challenges that went to the highest court of the land and the challenges basically hinged around the issue that this type of legislation had to do with religion; it didn't have to do with Sunday openings or closings or commercial trade, and it was challenged in that general policy area. So it did prove to be very controversial legislation.

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In the years that followed there were several court challenges, and I'd like to refer to probably one that was most significant. It was most significant because it dealt with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This was a case that was initiated, I think, around 1982-83, after the charter came into force, and it wasn't decided by the Supreme Court of Canada until 1985. It dealt with the Lord's Day Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and it had a very serious impact on the whole legislative direction and on subsequent court challenges.

I want to refer to just a very brief passage from Mr Justice Dickson of the Supreme Court of Canada. He was speaking for the court when he said this:

"In my view, the guarantee of freedom of conscience and religion prevents the government from compelling individuals to perform or abstain from performing otherwise harmless acts because of the religious significance of those acts to others. As I read the charter, it mandates that legislative preservation for Sunday day of rest should be secular. The diversity of belief or non-belief, the diverse sociocultural backgrounds of Canadians, make it constitutionally incompetent for the federal Parliament," and, by implication, for the legislatures, "to provide legislative preference for any one religion at the expense of those of another religious persuasion."

The court further concluded that the infringement of freedom of religion was not reasonable and demonstrably justified under section 1 of the charter. The legislation was declared to be wholly inoperative and of no force and effect. The result of the decision was to remove the criminal law underpinnings of Sunday retail closing laws in the province.

At this point in time, 1985—coincidentally around the

time that the David Peterson Liberal government came to power with the assistance of the NDP through the accord—we had up to that point the Ontario Law Reform Commission saying that this type of legislation must be secular, not religious in nature, we have the Retail Business Holidays Act, which endeavours to create secular purposes and intent but fails to do so, and we have the Supreme Court of Canada saying that if this type of legislation in any way affects religious observance, religious freedom, of any range of religions or beliefs, then it is not appropriate legislation.

So we then have a government of the day that is required to deal with these judicial interpretations, that has to deal with the interpretation of the charter on the Retail Business Holidays Act. We then have the Liberal government coming in with Bill 113. Bill 113 was introduced April 1988 and it also had, I guess, the sister or brother bill, Bill 114, to try to protect workers.

I agree with the member for Etobicoke West when he says that when we introduced that Bill 114 to protect workers, everybody on the NDP side said: "You can't legislate this protection through the Employment Standards Act, through employment standards legislation. It's impossible to do." And the Solicitor General stands in his place today and says: "We're going to rely on this legislation. It will protect workers."

Mr Speaker, I leave it up to you, in your other reality as a voting member of this Legislature, to determine whether it does or doesn't happen. But certainly, when you read the words of the NDP when they were in opposition and you listen to what the Solicitor General is saying today, they're totally at odds with each other. Where does the public cynicism come from? Where does the total falling apart of the New Democratic Party come from if it doesn't come from that? You've got no credibility left on a whole range of issues, including Sunday shopping, because you flip-flop all over the place on every single, solitary issue that you deal with.

Bill 114 was introduced by the Liberal government, as I said, in April 1988, and Bill 113 went out and received 465 oral and written submissions. It went to 13 centres other than Toronto. I was on the justice committee in August 1988 when they started this trooping around the city to consult with the people of Ontario. There were a lot of people coming before the committee who did not want wide-open Sunday shopping and they made that loud and clear.

What is very, very significant is that I also sat in on some of the hearings for Bill 115 which created a common pause day and a tourism exemption. What is absolutely amazing is that a lot of the retailers in August 1988 who went nose to nose, toe to toe, with me as a government member on the justice committee, saying that the local municipal option wouldn't work and they didn't want wide-open Sunday shopping, came in the summer of 1991 before Mike Farnan's committee,

as Solicitor General, and said they wanted to open it up because circumstances had changed.

A lot of circumstances did change. We had cross-border shopping. We were in the throes of the recession. We had retailers who were really suffering. We had students who were crying for work on Sundays, part-time, whenever and wherever they could get it. There were certain realities that existed in the summer of 1991 which didn't exist in the fall of 1988.

But I want to come back to one point that I mentioned before. Those committee hearings in the summer of 1991, Mike Farnan's bill—they heard these 488 submissions come in and they were saying: "Open it up. Open it up. Open it up." Mike Farnan, the guy who walked around in 1988 with the little yellow chicken saying, "You're taking the chicken way out," everywhere he went, what did he do? He took the chicken way out. He passed a bill, Bill 115, which purported to create a common pause day and then he turned around and created a municipal tourism exemption which in many respects was unenforceable and unworkable. The guy who symbolized the issue of taking the chicken way out took the biggest chicken way out possible.

But 180 days after this bill—Bill 115, the current legislation which is not being enforced, the common pause day legislation—became law in November 1991, the Premier stood up here and said, "Public attitudes have changed over recent years." Where was he the summer of 1991? Where was he in November 1991 when his government, his cabinet, enacted the common pause day legislation called Bill 115? Where were they? What happened between November and June 3 when the Premier announced that he was going to create instantly wide, wide, wide, wide-open Sunday shopping? As I mentioned, it's so wide you can drive a truck through it. A President's Choice truck can drive into a Loblaws superstore at 6 am Sunday morning, unload the produce, and that superstore is going to be open from 8 am Sunday until 8 pm Sunday night.

1700

Why did the Premier permit Bill 115 to be passed 180 days earlier? Mr Speaker, you know more than anyone else the reason why. The reason is that the Premier of this province is dysfunctional and he has caused his cabinet and his government to be dysfunctional.

Going back very briefly to the history of the legislation, again, if the Premier wanted some indication of which way he should be going on it, he had the opportunity between June 22, 1990, and March 20, 1991. There were some eight and a half months within that time frame when, as in 1903, the legislation was declared to be unconstitutional and of no force and effect. We had eight and a half months in 1990 when Bill 114 was as though it didn't exist. It was under appeal and we had wide-open Sunday shopping in the

province of Ontario. So we had not only the experience of the justice committee hearings in the summer of 1991, we had the de facto experience for the benefit of the Premier throughout the latter part of 1990 and up to March 1991 when in fact we had wide-open Sunday shopping.

So I ask you again, why did this Premier lead this cabinet into Bill 115, common pause day? I think I know why. I think the Premier thought that he was being true to his New Democratic Party agenda. Mr Speaker, we know what the Agenda for People said; you know what it said. We know what the first throne speech said. The first throne speech said, "We're going to create a common pause day," and the Premier introduced legislation to create a common pause day. Not only that, he passed the legislation. Some 180 days later, a full 180-degree turnaround and he reverses himself.

So the issue is a dysfunctional government at a time when Ontario needs leadership, when Ontario needs consistency, when Ontario needs predictability for the people of this province and for the businesses of this province.

To show how dysfunctional the government really is and was, Bill 115, which is still on the books—Mr Speaker, you know that bill is still there, but the Solicitor General has indicated to the police departments, "Don't enforce it." It had a totally unworkable, if I may use the term again, dysfunctional municipal tourism exemption, so much so that the municipal bylaws that would have been passed under that legislation could be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. Not only could it be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board, but a municipal bylaw for a tourism exemption enacted in Hawkesbury, Ontario, could be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board by a resident of Sarnia or a resident of Windsor. Talk about dysfunctional local tourism option. You're going to give somebody in Windsor the right to appeal a bylaw in Hawkesbury.

Talk about being dysfunctional. Bill 38, this legislation which creates wide-open Sunday shopping, still retains that tourism exemption for the other statutory holidays. It is possible for a municipality to pass a bylaw to create the exemptions for the statutory holidays, including Easter Sunday. So the tourism exemption bylaw provision and the Retail Business Holidays Act, which has been enacted by reason of Bill 115, will continue to exist after Bill 38 is enacted, if in fact it's going to be enacted.

That brings me to Bill 38. Bill 38 is the bill which was introduced June 3, 1992. We've waited a year for this legislation to come forward. Bill 38 makes three simple amendments to Ontario's Sunday shopping law.

The first amendment changes the present definition of holiday, replacing "Sunday" with "Easter Sunday." This change means that Sundays are no longer designated as

holidays and are therefore not restricted by the Retail Business Holidays Act. Essentially, retail stores of all kinds will be permitted to open on Sundays.

There's a significant omission. Whether it's conscious or not, I don't know. But I have a legal opinion which I asked legislative research, and through lawyer Susan Swift from that office, at my request—I won't go through the whole thing, but I'm sure the gist of it will not be lost on many members who are still concerned about family day on Sunday: Based on the wording of section 214 of the Municipal Act and a brief review of the cases, there is currently no power in the municipalities to restrict Sunday store hours to between, say, 12 noon or 1 pm and 5 pm.

When I introduced my debate I said, make no mistake about it, Bill 38 doesn't create wide-open Sunday shopping; it creates wide, wide, wide, wide-open Sunday shopping, so that it goes from 8 am until 8 pm on Sunday. For all those people who believe in a common pause day, this government couldn't even restrict the hours of opening on Sunday, couldn't restrict it from noon till 6. Start at 6 am Sunday and finish at 8 pm Sunday night. What about the impact for all these people who came to your committee? What about the workers?

As I said, you flip-flop, and when you come back and flip-flop, you make a bigger mistake than you made in the first place. You're dysfunctional. You don't listen. You're not qualified to govern any more. This bloody government does not consider the impact of its decisions on people. It does not consider reasonable transition—

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Are my ears failing me or did I not hear the member for Ottawa West refer to the government as "the bloody government"? If he did, I would ask you to rule on that that's it's unparliamentary and he should withdraw that comment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): I would say to the honourable member it would be best if he wasn't quite as inflammatory as he is occasionally. But by all means, the honourable member does have the floor and I ask the honourable member to continue.

Mr Chiarelli: I not only have the floor, I think I have the point, and the point is that the government is really dysfunctional, the government has not been sensitive to so many people in this province on so many issues.

Why did you have to go so far in the other direction? Why did you not at least consider looking at some restriction on the hours of wide-open Sunday shopping? We didn't hear any debate on that. As I mentioned, we don't even know where this bill is going after second reading. We don't know if it's going to committee so that type of thing can be discussed. I'm not even talking

about public hearings. I'm talking about you and I as members to be able to sit and say, "Well, maybe you've gone too far with the bill and maybe Sunday openings, retail openings, should be restricted some way between noon and 6 o'clock on Sundays." You'd still have Sunday openings. That type of thing would accommodate so many people.

1710

Again, the government is dysfunctional. We don't even know if they're going to discuss it in committee of the whole, whether they're going to a legislative committee for half a day or a day to review some of the comments of the members, so that we can give some impact matters of this legislation some sober second thought, sober second thought on those provisions of the tourism exemption that will continue after Bill 38 is enacted.

The second change to Bill 38 updates a section originally contained in the Liberal legislation basically:

"A provision in a lease or other agreement that has the effect of requiring a retail business establishment to remain open on a holiday or on a Sunday, whether or not the Sunday is a holiday, is of no effect...."

That is trying to protect the small retailer and it does address an impact issue, but it's an impact issue that was in the original legislation that was enacted by the Liberals.

The third change to the legislation is a provision which makes these amendments retroactive.

Hon Mr Wildman: He's been talking for an hour and he still hasn't said whether he's in favour of the bill.

Mr Chiarelli: I want to say that the Minister of Environment and Energy thinks that a lot of the things I'm touching on in this debate are inappropriate. He is a member of cabinet and he is a member of the government which held off debate on this legislation.

I wish he'd stay here for a minute, because I was just getting to the point at which this government amended the legislation to make it retroactive, which means that the Premier in his wisdom stood up and was hit by a bolt of lightning, as he was with his fiscal policy of restraint, stood up here on June 3 and said, "Oh, yes, as of today it's all changed," signed Bob Rae.

His Solicitor General stood up and told the police departments not to enforce the existing law. I'm the first opposition member to debate Bill 38 in this Legislature, one year after the Solicitor General told the police departments not to enforce existing legislation. That is such an undermining of the principles of good government and of the legislative process. It totally underlies the pathological dysfunctioning of this government.

The government, as I mentioned, did not consider the impact of its legislation in any significant way. I talked about at least considering the impact of the hours of

operation, which it did not do.

There's another impact issue which I think needs addressing in a significant way and that has to do with the impact on 6,000 small businessmen in the province of Ontario. These are the 6,000 convenience stores in Ontario employing over 52,000 people full- and part-time. The sector used to have a total sales volume of over \$3.8 billion. About 4,600 stores are individually owned small businesses, owner-operated.

The Ontario Convenience Stores Association members buy over \$500 million worth of products from Ontario wholesalers and distributors, pay approximately \$32 million in retail sales tax to the Ontario government and pay \$12 million in municipal taxes. They are being impacted very negatively by this legislation, and I want to address and make some observations on their concerns.

But, more particularly, I want to address this theme of mine of a government which is dysfunctional. I have here an extract from a brief presented to the standing committee on finance and economic affairs; this was during pre-budget consultations, presented March 8, 1993. I'm going to quote about five paragraphs which indicate how dysfunctional this NDP government really is.

This is a section, section IV, called "Government Reaction," and while I read this I want the people at home and I want the 6,000 people who are convenience store managers or owners to realize that the Minister of Environment and Energy is sitting there laughing and joking at the fact that I'm raising their concerns.

Hon Mr Wildman: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The member knows full well that the reason I am laughing is that I am amazed and find it quite amusing that he could speak for the length of time he's spoken and not take a position either in favour or in opposition to a bill.

The Acting Speaker: That's not a point of order, but I will say it is improper to impute motives in the House. So I'd ask the honourable member to be a little careful.

Mr Chiarelli: It's a well-taken comment, Mr Speaker, and I retract the comment I made about the Minister of Environment, but now that I have his attention for and on behalf of those 6,000 small businessmen and women in the province of Ontario, I want to read what they say about government reaction:

"While our latest report, *The Impact of Sunday Shopping on Ontario's Convenience Stores*, has not been shared with government officials—it is due to be released this week—we have been receiving reactions to our plight that we can only characterize as frustrating. We have been granted meetings with the Treasurer's staff and with the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Those meetings have been cordial.

"We have also felt that the meetings were conducted within an atmosphere of disbelief. In other conversations with officials we have heard comments like 'the convenience store owners are whiners,'; 'convenience stores will always survive,' and 'convenience stores made the adjustment in other jurisdictions.' There have been rumours about an internal report, prepared by the federal government—perhaps from Statscan—that shows no damage to the industry when Sunday shopping was introduced in BC.

"The OCSA finds this situation difficult to deal with. Nothing has been said up front, no one has confronted us with contrary figures or evidence that we can deal with.

"Our problem then is getting the government to deal with us directly and openly." If I can repeat that, there are 6,000 small business people in the province saying: "Our problem then is getting the government to deal with us directly and openly."

"We believe that government officials are not being completely candid with us by not commenting directly to us about any reservations they may have or by revealing any information that might contradict our claims. We believe that there is an internal bias within government staff against our case and that until it is brought forward and the evidence upon which it is based is shared, the plight of 11 companies who have all been good corporate citizens, the employment of 13,000 people and the investment of thousands of small business people in this province will be at risk because of some gigantic misunderstanding.

"In an effort to overcome this governmental attitude, the OCSA has commissioned a completely open, wide-ranging review of our sales records. We have held meetings with provincial officials and we have reviewed the impact of the introduction of Sunday shopping in other jurisdictions. Neither in our own case or in the case of the independent stores is there any justification for the attitude that the convenience store sector will easily survive."

1720

What I'm saying to the Minister of Environment and the government is that you have an obligation to consider the impact of your legislation. The convenience store owners association has accepted, reluctantly, the reality of wide-open Sunday shopping. They're concerned about the hours. I commented on the hours a few minutes ago. The livelihood of 50,000 Ontario people depends on the financial viability of that particular sector.

We've had no consideration for the hours, as I said. The President's Choice tractor-trailer drives up at 6 am Sunday morning, empties its produce, and it goes till 8 o'clock Sunday night, 8 am to 8 pm. Has the government considered the economic impact on the 50,000 people who depend on corner convenience stores?

I just want to relate to the people of the province an executive summary of the brief of the convenience store owners association. It's very short, very succinct, four or five very simple lines, but it speaks a lot. It says:

"Executive Summary: Last Year: From June 7, 1992, when the Ontario government first allowed Sunday shopping, to September 30, 1992, the members of the Ontario Convenience Stores Association have lost \$59 million in total sales. Our convenience stores have lost \$12,000 each in sales for the months of June, July, August and September. Close to 2,000 of our convenience store employees have lost their jobs"—this government purports to create jobs—"and 200 of our convenience stores have closed."

This government purports to encourage the creation of small business. The executive summary goes on:

"This year, from June 7, 1992, to June 6, 1993, the members of the Ontario Convenience Stores Association will lose \$179 million in total sales. Convenience stores will lose \$38,500 each in total sales and an additional 1,000 of our convenience store employees will lose their jobs."

They're not asking for the abolition of Bill 38. I've spoken to some of the leaders of the association. They're not even asking for us to vote against Bill 38; they're simply saying the government has a responsibility to consider the impact. It has the responsibility to consider the impact of wide-open morning Sunday shopping on the people who support a common pause day, which it hasn't done, and it has the obligation to consider the impact of wide-open Sunday morning shopping on convenience stores and late evening, wide-open Sunday shopping on convenience stores. It hasn't done that, by not providing any consideration of the hours.

I want to refer to a letter dated March 17, 1993, from the Ontario Convenience Stores Association. I won't go through all of it because I've already made some comments on it. But they're acting very responsibly, the convenience stores association executive and members, because they've made a number of suggestions, and I just want to indicate the suggestions. In addition to the fact that some dealing with the hours can assist in the impact, they've also made the following suggestions:

"The commission for collecting the retail sales tax should be increased to 10% and the cap removed to enable these small business men and women to survive.

"The government consider imposing commercial rent control." That's a very complicated issue. I'm not sure I agree with it, but the government has not seriously looked at it.

"The provincial government restrict municipalities' rights to impose licensing and other burdens on convenience stores." They're looking for some provincial legislative assistance, because right now there's no

control over store hours, there's no control over the impact of the large retail chains on small corner stores. So they're asking for some legislative assistance from the province so that their government burden expenses will be reduced. They're asking that the Treasurer grant a provincial income tax credit to convenience stores. It may or may not be reasonable, but the government has not even given it serious consideration.

"The Ontario government consider the right to sell beer and wine in convenience stores"—that is another item which the convenience stores want to put on the table to assist in the impact of wide, wide, wide-open Sunday shopping. They go on to indicate here, because they're very realistic: "We realize that some of these suggestions will be difficult and other suggestions are new ideas for us. However, our situation has become so drastic that we are willing to review all options as a means of compensating for our lost jobs and revenue. We are asking you to contact the Treasurer, the Premier or the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations on our behalf. Ask them to support us in finding a remedy."

That's what I'm doing here now, this minute. I am reading, for the people of Ontario and for the cabinet and for the Premier, some reasonable requests which are being made by the 50,000 people who work in this industry and by the 6,000 store owners or managers of the chains of convenience stores.

I do have other matters which I'm not going to go through because my time is quickly running out, but I did want to refer very briefly to the fact that Bill 38 required the Minister of Labour to set up a committee to study the impact of Bill 38, wide-open Sunday shopping, on various sectors of the Ontario economy and Ontario society. Those recommendations were tabled in the Legislature last week.

They amount to absolutely nothing in the sense that they're basically saying, "Please try to protect our interests." There are a couple of specific recommendations, but what is most troubling—and it goes to the fact again that it's a totally dysfunctional government and that this committee report was tabled last week by the Minister of Labour, on which there was no comment, no response. No forum was created to deal with the issue.

The committee just reported last week and the Solicitor General announced today he's setting up another committee to look at the impacts of Bill 38. That's what the committee report is that was filed last week. The committee reported on Bill 38 and now the Solicitor General, the third Solicitor General in two and a half years, stands in his place today and says he's setting up another committee to look at the impact.

This government is totally, absolutely not only dysfunctional; it is disrespectful to the people in this Legislature. It is disrespectful to the people of the

province of Ontario. For reasons that I've enunciated, I can understand why many people will vote in favour of this legislation, but this government has not considered even a modest consideration for the impact, namely Sunday mornings, when we have wide-open retail shopping possible and starting to exist in the province.

We have significant impact that this government has not considered for 50,000 people who are employed in the small convenience, corner grocery store operations. So it is for those reasons that I will be voting against this legislation, because the government has been insensitive to the impact.

1730

Even accepting legislation that would create so-called wide-open Sunday shopping, when Bob Rae stood up in the Legislature on June 3, 1992, to announce Bill 38, to announce wide-open shopping, I don't think the people in this province understood that you're going to get superstores and wholesaling operations opening at 8 am Sunday morning. That was not contemplated, and I think people are finally starting to see that. The impact, at that time, has to be dealt with, and I do believe this government has to give some serious consideration to the plight of the small business people involved in convenience stores and corner grocery stores.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the time, and my debate has ended.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): It certainly was a very interesting hour and 25 minutes as we went through a very strong history lesson on the issue of Sunday shopping. Obviously, the presentation could have been done in about 30 minutes. I just wanted to pop up, though, and make a few comments in terms of supporting what the member was saying about the convenience store associations, because as we remember, one of the discussions about the Sunday shopping issue, of course, was that it was going to create new employment and new jobs.

Some of those who opposed Sunday shopping said that this wouldn't be the case, that it would only shift the jobs from convenience stores, from those stores that are already open on Sunday, to other places. Certainly, from some of the information the member presented—and the people from local convenience stores in my area who have been in to see me clearly support that evidence as well, that their sales on Sunday, which was traditionally their strongest day, are down very substantially. So I think bringing that point out in the debate is very good and shows some of the difficulties in dealing with this issue.

We all understand the difficulties and how times have changed. I guess some of us still feel, though, that we wish somehow there could be one day where commerce and the activities of commerce could maybe not totally stop but be done in a much slower manner. We all live in a very busy world, a very busy time, and I think

many of us would like to see that there be at least one day of a week where, for lack of a better term, there would be somewhat of a common pause or a chance for us to slow down from our busy pace of life. I think that's why some of us still continue to believe that Sunday shopping is not in the best interests of the folks.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I found the speech of the member for Ottawa West to be an excellent speech because what it did was go through history. It's important in this Legislature that we have some history of what the stands used to be in this Legislature. I well recall, as the member pointed out, that the Premier of this province, as one of his primary issues in the last election campaign, talked about Sunday shopping and how this government that is in power now would never allow Sunday shopping. I think he was saying that at the same time that he was saying there would be no casino gambling in the province of Ontario and was opposing that with the same degree of strength as he did in this case.

So I think the member for Ottawa West has done a service. I know he feels confined by the amount of time he was allowed under Bob Rae's new rules to express himself in this Legislature, and I certainly will be asking for unanimous consent, when I get to speak, to be allowed to speak for the same amount of time on an issue that I consider to be exceedingly important.

But if I looked at the issues, as the member did, that I thought were important to the NDP, if I were an objective observer who was going to vote one way or the other, one of the things that would have attracted me to the New Democratic Party would have been its stand on casino gambling—against—and its stand on Sunday shopping, a stand which was based on a common pause day, on the need to protect individuals who work in these various businesses and occupations across the province from being forced—and no matter what way you put it, they're going to be forced—to work on Sundays, the common pause day.

For this reason, I'm exceedingly pleased that the member for Ottawa West has taken it upon himself to speak for the length of time he has to outline the history of this government's stand and this issue as it relates to this House.

Mr Mills: I've been called, in my time on earth, a lot of things, but I've never been called a dysfunctional person. I think that anybody who knows me will say the last thing I should be called would be dysfunctional. Now, I saw the member for Ottawa West throw up his papers and tear them up and throw them on the floor like a kid throwing a temper tantrum, and that is being dysfunctional.

I just want to talk about this legislation. You people over there failed to come to grips with it. This government has got the courage and the fortitude at last to come to grips with Sunday shopping. All of you failed to do that.

We had the run-through and the history lesson from the member for Ottawa West that we could very well have done without.

I just want to refer to Hansard, May 26. Your leader, the leader of the third party, was talking about the debate you folks had on bringing back the municipal option, and he said: "I tell you, I finish as I started. I am absolutely amazed that the Liberal Party brought this resolution forward today, that it wants to remind Ontarians of how ineffectual it was and what lack of leadership it had on this issue." I echo the sentiments of the leader of the third party. He goes on to say, "Our main criticism of" this party "now is: Get on with it." Today we are getting on with that to get this thing resolved.

I'm sure the people of Ontario are fed up to here and beyond with this issue of Sunday shopping. Let's get it out of the way, let's vote on it and let's get back to debating and coming to grips with the things the people of Ontario want: jobs and the economy. That's what the people want to listen to. The Gallup poll says 72% of Ontarians want Sunday shopping.

Mr Tim Murphy (St George-St David): I heard with interest the comments of the member for Durham East. I think it's probably quite correct that the people are fed up with it.

The thing that bothers me most about the way this issue has been dealt with is the fact that it wasn't dealt with last summer, it wasn't dealt with at the time the bill was first introduced, and it's the odd circumstance—frankly, it's an insult to the members of this House that the bill was introduced on a free-vote basis, and then the law, as it stood on the books, was not applied. I think that's an insult to all the members.

I just want the members to be clear up front: My vote will be for the legislation; however, I have some concerns.

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): Except if the wind blows the other way.

Mr Murphy: I find it interesting, the interjections of the member for Sarnia about which way the wind blows. I think he should pay some attention to his Premier. I remember when he was in another capacity, standing in this House, railing away against Sunday shopping and about the protection of workers, and now he's stood up in the House and he's in favour of it. So I think you should look at your own mirror, sir, and then you'll find out. I'm concerned about the degree of the righteous indignation with which the Premier stood up in this House and said there was something reprehensible about Sunday shopping, and now the tune is different.

But I think the people of this province are ready for it, subject to some concerns. I think it's probably inappropriate that we do not have some kind of at least

pause for part of Sunday. I think some kind of condition that would allow stores to open after 12 o'clock might be something this House and the members in committee should look forward to. I look forward to speaking more thoroughly on this issue when my turn in the debate comes up.

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Ottawa West has two minutes to make a response.

1740

Mr Chiarelli: I did want to make a couple of comments with respect to, first of all, the member for Oxford. I appreciate his intervention. It dealt with the substantive element of my debate and that's the impact on 50,000 employees who are working in small convenience stores across the province. It is significant that we deal with impact and substance.

With respect to the member for Durham East, he says: "Let's get on with it. Let's get the vote. Let's put this issue to bed." That's the problem with the New Democratic Party and this government. Basically it's like a bull in a china shop. It makes a mistake and then, when it does a flip-flop, it makes a bigger mistake.

I wish the member for Durham East would simply have said, using his words, that he wasn't concerned about people on Sunday mornings, that he wasn't concerned that all the retail operations are going to be open. Loblaws superstores are going to be open from 8 am to 8 pm—

Mr Mills: Read what I say in Hansard. Read it. I've said it before.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Mr Chiarelli: He didn't address that. He didn't address my comments. All he addressed was the fact that he didn't like the amount of time I was taking to put my case forward.

I would invite him to talk to the substance. I would invite him to talk to the impact of this legislation, the impact on 50,000 employees in this province, the impact on those people who support a common pause day who now, with Bill 38, do not even have Sunday mornings, the workers who don't even have Sunday mornings. Even if you support wide-open Sunday shopping, why couldn't you draft a bill that would start at noon and open up at noon instead of open up from the early hours of Sunday morning?

The member for Durham East is part of a dysfunctional government.

Mr Mills: See what I said in there.

The Acting Speaker: Order. I recognize the honourable member for Etobicoke West.

Mr Stockwell: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

[Applause]

Mr Stockwell: I thought it was the member from Durham.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): The day I

applaud you is the day I've really forgotten who I am.

Mr Stockwell: This debate, I think, will become more and more rowdy as we move on, because it's one of those particular issues—

Interjections.

Mr Stockwell: Here they go. All I said was it's going to be rowdy. I've woken them up. I can tell they're awake. The inaudible grunts are coming forward.

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: Okay, I'll do my best. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think he's finished.

Interjection.

Mr Stockwell: No, he's not finished. When one stops, the other begins.

What I'd like to do, first off, is—

Mr Perruzza: Tell us whether you're for or against right away.

Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, right off the top—it may silence the Downsview-Yorkview twins there—I'm in favour of the legislation.

Mr Perruzza: All right, there we go. Now we can listen to you.

Mr Stockwell: I have from the beginning supported Sunday shopping in my municipal career as an elected official. From 1985 on, I've been in favour of Sunday shopping. It's not a huge secret. I voted in favour of it at Metro council. I chaired a committee on Sunday shopping.

When I ran for this office, I said to the constituents of my riding, some of whom were opposed to me and I'm certain didn't vote for me because of the position I took on Sunday shopping—there is a large segment of my community that didn't want wide-open Sunday shopping.

Let's be very clear in the beginning: When I went out and sought election for this office, the question came up about Sunday shopping and I was very clear, if it came to a free vote in the House, I would vote in favour, which is exactly opposite to what all those people on the other side said. I would just like to be very clear, it's been a consistent message, I've been in favour.

I think what this Legislature needs to do at this time is not necessarily go back through the history of 1845, when a streetcar was introduced on Sunday, or Sunday sports and so on and so forth. The history of it all, the chronology of holiday shopping in Ontario, can be summarized from 1845 onwards. It can be a list that's quite long and gets you right up until 1993.

But, for our own purposes, I think it's important that we go back to when the leaders of our respective parties took positions on this issue and filled in the population of this province on what their position would be on Sunday shopping in this domain that we stand in today.

What was the position of the then Leader of the Opposition, now Premier, Mr Bob Rae? I took the time to go back through the Hansard recordings of previous administrations and I came up with the second and third readings of the Liberal motion of the day, which was for municipal option, ideally known locally as the domino option, and what the Premier of this day, the then Leader of the Opposition, had to say.

I read his comments and that was a tremendous speech—two very good speeches that Mr Rae made on those days. I think it's very important that the people of this province recall or be reminded of exactly what it is the member said in those days and I think it would be important for the members who weren't here then, on the government side, to hear exactly what Mr Rae had to say as Leader of the Opposition. I will say, quite often you had members opposite standing up and chastising both the Liberals and the Conservatives for offering what they consider to be irresponsible critics' positions on some issues we face today.

We also must bear in mind for history that the Premier of the day is the same man who campaigned against Sunday shopping. Yes, he's flip-flopped on casino gambling; yes, he's flip-flopped on government-run auto insurance; yes, he's flip-flopped on practically everything.

But what I thought the NDP held dear to their hearts, one issue that I didn't think you'd sell out on, one issue I thought on September 6, 1990, was over for at least five years, was the issue of Sunday shopping. I couldn't have been any more wrong or surprised that the socialists, the labour-leaning, left-wing cause célèbres, the 74 of you, could actually be convinced that what you had said, the rhetoric you had spouted for all those many decades about Sunday shopping, was just plain and simple socialist pap, bottom line.

They sold everybody out that you spoke for on that campaign: the workers, the churches and all the people who believed in you. So when I see the member for Durham East, Mr Mills, getting up and chanting and raving and ranting on that side of the House, I think he'd be better off to simply do what I think all members should do on this particular issue, sit in your seats like church mice, because you have no room at all to debate this issue, period, case closed.

Again they don't take my advice. I told them that \$10 billion was too much; they didn't take my advice. I told them five dumps in Durham is too many; they still didn't take my advice, and even at this point they're not taking it.

Let me start. Mr Bob Rae: He starts off by speaking to that domino piece of legislation the Liberals introduced. "I am referring now to the 1988 version of the views of the Solicitor General." This is Bob Rae speaking so this is interesting stuff.

Mr Perruzza: How long are you going to go for?

Mr Stockwell: I'm going to go for quite a while—"because frankly one would need"—

Mr Mammoliti: I'm going to leave again.

Mr Stockwell: I'll do my best. The members for Yorkview and Downsview are starting to complete sentences for each other.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Which is just as well because they can't do it for themselves.

Mr Stockwell: "I am referring now"—this is Bob Rae speaking—"to the 1988 version of the views of the Solicitor General because frankly one would need to have a complete case of amnesia not to recognize that the views of the Solicitor General have changed rather dramatically as her rise to power in the Liberal Party has evolved."

Here's Bob Rae saying that a member of the Liberal government's views have changed rather dramatically with her rise in ranking within the Liberal Party. "There was a time when the Solicitor General had a very different view from the one she is expressing today."

"We all respect the right of members to change their minds. This is a long-honoured right among members of the Legislature, as it is among individuals. I think we are also allowed to point out precisely when these changes occur in the life of an honourable member."

That was Mr Rae and I think I'm going to take my time today to point out exactly when this life change took place for Mr Rae.

He goes on to say: "In 1988, it is the modern and contemporary thing to do to have stores open on Sunday. It is what the modern yuppie family wants. It is what the trendy way of the world should be. This is what should transpire and this is what should happen." The immortal words of Robert K. Rae, QC.

1750

"If the government of the day had the courage to say that, I would say, fine, let's have a debate on the question of whether Sunday should be a day which is a commercial day like any other day or whether we should recognize that one day of the week should be a day of common rest and common pause as much as is humanly...possible" and practical.

"I want to say very clearly that I will speak personally and also on behalf of my caucus because we are more or less of the same view on this question with some varieties of opinion, as they are expressed from time to time within a caucus. I can say"—now, this is their Premier, the socialist Premier in opposition—"quite honestly I am not an ideologue on this issue, nor do I come to it from a sense that Sunday is a common day of religious expression and that is the reason it should be preserved.

"I have a much more practical sense as to why this is important and why it has assumed the importance that it has. It is simply this." He went on to say, "We live in

a world where more and more people are having to work longer and longer hours in order to make ends meet. Many of my constituents who 10 or 15 years ago would not have had to work are working now. Many of them are working longer hours than they were working 10 or 15 years ago. For that reason, the pressure to work on Sunday and the pressure to be away from the family is growing all the time."

Mr Bradley: Who said that?

Mr Stockwell: Robert K. Rae, QC.

"There is much sentimentality expressed in our culture about the family. I do not intend to engage in any more of that than I absolutely have to. But I do think that if any of us were to ask ourselves what is the one institution in our society that we would want to try to sustain, as well as the rights of individuals, it would be the family."

Mr Bradley: Who said this? Paul Magder?

Mr Stockwell: Robert K. Rae, QC.

"It would be our right and our chance or opportunity to be together"—and it's certainly gotten quite quiet here—"to spend time together and to spend time free from pressures of the marketplace and free from pressures of the commercial world, a time when we can be together."

Mr Bradley: Tell me that's not Bob Rae.

Mr Stockwell: That's Robert K. Rae, QC.

"It is...a value in our culture as Canadians. It is a value in the cultures from which many of us come. It is a value which has profound importance in a great many communities which make up the Canadian community." Words by Robert K. Rae, QC.

Sir, you could have put this to music, entered it into a tape and CITY-TV, Radio Free Noon at CBC and Metro NDP Morning would have been playing this non-stop for hours on end.

Here he goes again, speaking personally: "If I could speak personally again, on a Sunday afternoon I can go and visit my constituents whose homes may have been in Italy or Portugal or in many, many other parts of the world, but I will mention these two cultures particularly, and I know well that if I go there on Sunday at 12 o'clock the whole family will be there."

No longer, because the NDP is introducing Sunday shopping legislation. No longer will he be able to go to his constituents' homes who happen to be from Italy and Portugal, at noon, and have a drink of wine, as he says, and chat about family concerns, because they'll all be out shopping.

To continue: "I believe"—

Mr Bradley: Is it still Bob Rae?

Mr Stockwell: Robert K. Rae, QC, goes on: "I believe that is a fact of contemporary life. The first argument I hear is made in defence not of some monstrosity or some joke called a local option, because it is

a joke—I am going to come to that in terms of my second argument—but simply that...it is modern, that it is contemporary, that it is commercially successful, that it is the way to go and that it is the way the world is working seven days a week, 24 hours a day. 'Let's keep the stores going. Let's keep them open. Let's keep all those options available. Let's give that right to the individual to shop whenever he or she wants.'" He was warming up, that Robert K. Rae, QC.

He goes on. "I must confess I do not regard that as a contemporary or a particularly modern notion. There is nothing contemporary or modern about it. It is, if I may say so, a very old-fashioned, commercial Victorian idea that people should be working 12 hours a day, seven days a week. It is not a modern doctrine at all. It is a very old-fashioned doctrine and it is a very vicious doctrine," said Robert K. Rae, QC.

Mr Bradley: Is this still his stand? Because I voted for him.

Mr Stockwell: Apparently he's changed, but I think he was an honourable sort.

Now here's a really good part. The guy was warming up, he was in full swing, sucking those votes up all over the province: "I'm opposed to Sunday shopping. Vote for me. Read Agenda for People. Everybody's lying but me. Gosh, I'll be the greatest Premier in the world."

He goes on, "Surely"—and apparently, he was talking to Shirley—"if one genuinely wanted to be modern or contemporary, one would be talking about ways we can ensure that people should be working less." Well, he succeeded at something. He's Premier and people are certainly working less.

"I believe profoundly that people should not be working for as long, for as many hours as they are being required to work today." It worked again; people aren't working as long or for as many hours a day as they used to be. "I believe profoundly that we should not only be talking about making Sunday a day of rest; we should be talking about making Saturday a day of rest." He didn't even go far enough; he's now made a day of rest in this province for 300,000 people of Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and he's succeeded in Friday as well. The man is incredible, brilliant. He fulfilled one promise at least.

He goes on—and this is in opposition. This is Robert K. Rae, QC.

Mr Bradley: Is this the man who was against casinos?

Mr Stockwell: He's against casinos; he's opposed to Sunday shopping. "We should be talking about reducing the number of people who have to work at night"—there, he's going to stop people from working at night—"the number of people who have to work shifts"—we won't have to work shifts. It's Shangri-La—"the number of people who have to work shifts, the

number of people who have to work difficult hours, the number of people who have to work 50 and 55 hours in order to make ends meet. As a modern industrial society, we should be addressing the fact that if we are serious about maintaining a sense of freedom and decency we have to deal with this question of working time and working hours." He's dealt with that question better than any Premier in the past number of years.

Again, he was just warming up. This is a speech from Robert K. Rae, QC. This was before he called Mr Peterson a liar for not putting beer in corner stores. This is the Premier then: "One of the first questions I asked in this House six years ago" from this date in 1988, so now he's going to history. He actually felt the same way six years previous to the 1988 debate—"dealt with this question of working time, the fact that families are being forced to work longer and harder hours in order to make ends meet in our society. More and more people are working overtime. More and more people are working part-time, because that is the only kind of work they can get. They add on, they work and they work and they moonlight. They do work here and they do work there. Why? Because they do not get paid enough." He fixed that again. They're not getting paid at all any more.

"It is not because of some Calvinist urge, that they think it is good for their souls, that they have to go out there and sweat 12 hours a day. It is because they have to, because they have no bloody choice, because they make \$4.50 or \$5 an hour, because they have a family, because they have to pay the rent that is going up faster than they can keep up with and, if they have a house, so that they can keep up with the mortgage. It is impossible.

"The first thing I want to say is when members of the Liberal Party talk about modernity"—

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): What?

Mr Stockwell: I don't know. —"all I can say is if that is their version of the noble city, they can have it"—talking about Sunday shopping—"it is theirs. They can flog that commercial doctrine, that it is somehow trendy and contemporary to work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. I will say quite frankly I do not regard it as restful to go shopping with my family." Robert K. Rae, QC.

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): He was right.

Mr Bradley: Here's a letter to the editor.

Mr Stockwell: He was right, apparently, in opposition, and Robert K. Rae, QC, like a fish on the beach, is flipping and flopping around, unrecognizable.

I've got my letter that I want to read, thanks to the member for St Catharines who nobly gave it to me, but I'm out of time, so I want to leave those members from the government side—

Mr Bradley: What does the headline say, though?

Mr Stockwell: "Rae No Longer Has My Support." That was an NDP riding.

I will adjourn the debate and hope that we can all come back tomorrow. Maybe Robert K. can come as well, and hear the immortal words of himself a few short years ago.

1800

HEALTH CARE

The Acting Speaker (Mr Dennis Drainville): Pursuant to standing order 34, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made. The member for Renfrew North has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given yesterday by the Honourable Minister of Health. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter and the minister or parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): Let me say at the outset that I appreciate that the Minister of Health has other obligations. She kindly indicated earlier today that she could not be here. I understand that entirely and I'm happy to see the parliamentary assistant, the member for Simcoe Centre, here.

Having said that, I want to take a few moments this evening to address a concern that I have over the expenditure control program that the Ministry of Health tabled at the social contract talks as of last week. I want to say to the members in this Legislature of all sides that this is an issue that is going to be very much before the community as we head into the spring. I feel very, very strongly that the package of proposals that the government tabled last week, expecting to save this year \$226 million—as I read the document, and I might be misreading it, I think it's pretty clear this particular set of proposals that was tabled last week is going to affect everyone in the province.

In my view, and one of the reasons I'm on my feet tonight, I'm deeply concerned that the package has a bias against rural Ontario. It is perhaps an unintended bias, but in the last number of days, in speaking to health care professionals and others in my county of Renfrew, both in the city of Pembroke and in rural communities like Barry's Bay and Deep River, everyone I have spoken to is very concerned about the practical effect of what has been proposed.

Now, let me say as well that the minister's answers have been very confusing because the Minister of Health has been saying to myself and to others, including the Tory Health critic, the member for Simcoe West, that these are essentially proposals. "Not to worry. We're going to negotiate these with the medical association."

Let there be no confusion. On April 23, almost a month ago, the Minister of Finance for Ontario stood in

this place and said, "We have an expenditure control program that is going to eliminate or reduce \$2.4 billion worth of expenditures on the program side this year in Ontario," and that as part of that determined \$2.4 billion expenditure program reduction, \$275 million of that will come in payment to physicians. That has been decided.

I understand why the government feels it has to do that. I'm not even going to quarrel with the need for expenditure reductions. We all know why we're at this point. But the government has said, "We have fixed this figure and it is non-negotiable"—the figure.

Now we have last week, at the table, a set of specific proposals that the Ministry of Health has tabled but that I gather were prepared by treasury that contain a number of very significant proposals that are intended to reduce by \$226 million these payments to physicians.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): The most vulnerable physicians.

Mr Conway: Let me say to the House and to the province beyond, doctors are going to have to do their share in this. I am very concerned that the government has inadvertently or otherwise chosen the most vulnerable of the doctors, the young doctors, to carry a lot of the burden.

But in my remaining time, let me say that the government's proposals, as a package, are clearly going to have an impact on the provision of health services in rural Ontario and I believe elsewhere, in talking to doctors and hospital administrators and others in communities like Barry's Bay and Renfrew and Deep River and Pembroke. I say to my friend from Woodstock, the member for Oxford, that the London Free Press of Saturday, May 15, observes that at Four Counties General Hospital in Newbury they are reporting the very same things that I'm hearing in my county.

My concern is this: The government's plan has been outlined.

Hon Howard Hampton (Minister of Natural Resources): Is this a doctors' strike, Sean?

Mr Conway: It has nothing to do with the doctors' strike. It has everything to do with service reduction to rural constituents. That's my worry. My point and my concern, on behalf of my constituents, is, what alternate

plan does the government of Ontario have, does the Ministry of Health have to ensure that in rural communities like Barry's Bay and Newbury and Deep River and Bancroft and Seaforth and Exeter and a whole bunch of other ones, Minden and Haliburton, what plan does the government have in place to ensure a reasonable level of care, particularly in the area of emergency services where doctors now are indicating, from Sudbury to Renfrew, that they are planning to withdraw from the provision of those services? What plan does the ministry have to ensure in rural communities that a reasonable level of emergency and other health services can be continued as this plan or a version of it is imposed on the doctors and the patients all across Ontario?

Mr Paul Wessinger (Simcoe Centre): If I might just clarify with respect to some of the comments made by the minister with respect to the honourable member's question, first of all, it must be noted that effective July 1, 1993, under the new regulations of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, new entrants to post-graduate medical training will not be able to bill OHIP until they have completed training. It is essential therefore to develop alternatives.

Currently, medical residents may be employed by hospitals in small rural communities such as Barry's Bay and Manitouwadge to provide emergency room coverage during off hours—that is, evenings and weekends. The ministry is aware of the emergency room situation and we will be looking at alternative plans to ensure essential services are covered. The proposal from the ministry does include \$5 million to be assigned to meet these services.

It must be noted also that medical residents receive salaries and benefits from the ministry ranging from \$41,000 to \$64,000 per year, and may work up to 60 hours per week. In the interests of public safety, the ministry recognizes that it may be inappropriate for residents to provide medical services outside their regular work week.

The Acting Speaker: There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 1807.

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N° 22

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Wednesday 19 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 19 mai 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

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A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

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Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Wednesday 19 May 1993

The House met at 1333.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

EASTER SEAL RUN/WALKATHON

Mr Charles Beer (York North): On Sunday, May 30, the 17th annual Persechini Easter Seal Run/Walkathon will take place in Newmarket. This year is a very special year as the event will go over the \$1-million mark for the first time. That is an incredible achievement. Literally thousands of volunteers have participated and contributed since the first run in 1976.

Today, the Persechini Run/Walkathon is a highly anticipated event in our community. People from throughout York region and Simcoe county, from Newmarket, Aurora, King township, East Gwillimbury, Bradford, Tottenham, Beeton, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Georgina come out to run and walk and to help kids.

We all know the tremendous job the Easter Seal Society does in improving the lives of children with disabilities and their families.

Joe and Rosalia Persechini have both been a constant factor in ensuring the success of this event. I know I speak on behalf of all those involved in this remarkable fund-raising effort in saying thank you for your leadership and inspiration in helping kids.

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I direct this statement to the Premier.

In the wake of budget cuts of over 21%, the conservation authorities of Ontario have responded by submitting a comprehensive cost-cutting package that will save taxpayers \$100 million per year. This Blueprint for Success was submitted to this government last week and we are yet to hear a response indicating that this government is serious about cost-cutting measures.

In their effort to offload budget reductions on to the conservation authorities, the government has failed to identify its own layers of waste and duplications: \$16.5 million per year is wasted because 11 different government agencies are entangled in the provision of land development plans; the same type of duplication wastes \$12.5 million in soil erosion and storm water management, \$10.5 million in water cleanup programs and \$2.5 million in duplicated tree-planting programs. The message: The government has the management problem, not the conservation authorities.

The conservation authorities of Ontario have proposed to provide environmental protection on a watershed ecosystem basis. They have provided you with a policy initiative that will disentangle the web of duplicated services, save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars

and provide environmental protection in a way that is locally accountable.

Mr Premier, would you please implement their Blueprint for Success.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr Pat Hayes (Essex-Kent): I rise to make a statement on safety on our highways. I know the Minister of Transportation is keen on improving highway safety because only recently he announced a six-point safety program to discourage drivers from speeding and causing accidents. I welcome his initiative.

What I would like to speak about today is not vehicles that are speeding but vehicles that are travelling slowly. I'm talking about farm vehicles that are not usually capable of travelling faster than 40 kilometres an hour.

Slow-moving vehicles are required by law to prominently display a slow-moving vehicle warning sign to alert motorists. This sign looks like this, and when people stick these signs on their driveways, mailboxes or fenceposts, it causes confusion and can cause accidents.

I think it is important that safety symbols not be abused. The slow-moving vehicle sign is a much-abused symbol in many rural communities. The Farm Safety Association has been lobbying for many years to restrict and regulate the use of slow-moving vehicle signs in order to increase safety and reduce accidents on highways and rural roads.

I urge the Minister of Transportation, who has clearly shown his commitment to highway safety, to give this matter his speedy attention and also urge other motorists to heed this sign when travelling down our highways.

TVONTARIO

Ms Dianne Poole (Eglinton): I'd like to join other members in saluting the efforts of TVOntario's 90 volunteer advisory councillors and board members. The efforts of these community representatives are vital to keeping TVOntario responsive to the educational and community needs of the people of Ontario.

TVO's councillors and board members met in Sioux Lookout recently. The meeting, known as RAP, was a resounding success. Extensive and productive meetings and discussions were held with many representatives and residents of Sioux Lookout, the Northern Nishnawbe Education Council, local elders and organizations like Wahsa, the distance education network serving remote communities in the north.

The volunteer councillors will play a key role in keeping the lines of communication active between the province's native communities. They will meet with bands and first nation representatives in their areas to

explore ways TVO can address the native people's educational needs.

I'd like to also note that TVO's audience, as measured by Nielsen ratings, has increased 11.7% this spring over last year.

TVOntario asked me to highlight the incredibly warm, generous and open reception they received in Sioux Lookout. From TVOntario, which is located in my riding of Eglinton, to Sioux Lookout, a great big "meegwetch," which is "thank you."

1340

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): The Ministry of Labour is currently considering reducing exposure limits for approximately 200 substances.

While there is no question that existing exposure limits should be reviewed and amended where there is reasonable scientific evidence that this would help create a healthier working environment, a number of serious concerns have been raised about the government's approach to this issue.

First and foremost, the short time frame, across-the-board approach that the government has taken will be very costly and unmanageable, particularly for small and medium-sized industrial operations. This will have a negative effect on Ontario's industrial base, which is already struggling with the combined effects of the recession, increased competition and other government initiatives.

The government's proposal also does not address the exposure limits in force within our major trading partner and competitor, the United States. Significant variations and standards may impose a cost penalty on Canadian firms which could make them unnecessarily uncompetitive with the US.

I would also like to draw the Minister of Labour's attention to the fact that the Canadian Foundry Association recently indicated its disappointment that it has not been able to meet with the committee responsible for this matter to express its concerns.

Ontario's industries are willing to work with the government and labour towards ensuring that we have a safe and productive work environment. However, it is imperative that there be consultation with all the partners and that the changes be made in a measured, prioritized manner with full regard for the economic impact on employers and employees.

CANADA 125 AWARDS

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): Tomorrow evening I have the great privilege of honouring 24 people in my riding of Sarnia who have shown caring and dedication through their many acts of generosity and humanitarianism.

Last year Her Majesty approved the striking of a commemorative medal to mark the 125th anniversary of

Confederation. This medal is to honour persons who have made a significant contribution to their fellow citizens, their community or to Canada and who reflect the diverse nature of Canadian society.

Time does not allow me to name all of the recipients or all of their wonderful deeds, but I would like to point out a few of these people: people like Judy Acton, who founded the Sarnia division of the Leukaemia Research Fund after receiving a bone marrow transplant and recovering from leukaemia some years ago; Rose Hodgson, who has dedicated over 60 years to sports and athletics, not just in Sarnia but throughout Canada; and Shelley Ross, who has been disabled for many years and uses a wheelchair. Her experiences have enabled her to help many other disabled people in our community through her involvement with Sarnia Handicapped Aiming for Rehabilitation and Equality, or SHARE. These are but three of the people we will be celebrating tomorrow night.

I thank all the people of Sarnia who helped me in the task of identifying the many individuals deserving of such an award. There are many wonderful people in Sarnia who may not get official recognition for their contribution because, unfortunately, not everyone can receive a medal. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those in our community who give of themselves to help others. It is this quality that makes Sarnia the best community in Ontario.

BICYCLING SAFETY

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): I am pleased to announce that on the morning of this coming Sunday, May 23, my young constituents in Ottawa South will be given the opportunity to develop a good understanding of the importance of bicycle safety by attending a child safety bicycle rodeo.

I want to take this opportunity to commend my local Canadian Tire store and my community newspapers, Alta Vista-Canterbury News and the Hunt Club Riverside News, for the leadership role they have assumed in organizing this bicycle safety rodeo.

At the rodeo, young people will have a chance to meet Bert and Gert, the Alert Twins from the Stay Alert...Stay Safe program. In addition, information on safety and cycling will be presented by the Ottawa Police, who will emphasize the importance of bicycle safety and inspections.

I also want to recognize the enthusiasm for cycling in Ottawa South and Ottawa-Carleton generally. This area of the province has the highest rate of bicycle ridership and, further, the highest rate of helmet usage.

I like to think that my constituents and the other people living in Ottawa-Carleton are leaders in recognizing that cycling is healthy not only for the cyclist but for the environment as well. Responsible cyclists, like responsible motorists, need to be constantly aware of

what is happening on a shared road and the ways they can protect themselves and others from injury.

The child safety bicycle rodeo will contribute towards the education of our young cyclists in a sport which they can enjoy until their very late years.

Mr Speaker, I am sure you and the other members of this House will join me in congratulating my constituents and in particular Canadian Tire, my community newspapers and the Ottawa Police in their efforts to promote safe cycling in Ottawa South.

BIKE TO WORK WEEK

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Many of you are aware in this Legislative Assembly that Bike to Work Week is May 17-21.

The city of Toronto is busy making plans for the biggest Bike to Work Week ever. Members of the Legislative Assembly are invited to participate in the Leaders of the Way Challenge. The challenge is to demonstrate a commitment to bicycles as an alternative and environmentally friendly mode of transportation. The challenge will bring together elected representatives from the city of Toronto, Metro and the province as well as members of the business community.

On May 21, participants will gather at city hall at 7:30 am, where the ride will begin. Escorts will accompany them to Metro city hall and then proceed to Queen's Park. A brief awards ceremony will take place, followed by the breakfast.

The goal is simple, and that is to get more people involved, to participate in the event to promote safe cycling.

In London, the Thames Region Ecological Association transportation options planning committee and the London Bicycle Advisory Committee have also been participating in Bike to Work Week.

Members of the cycling community will be gathering tomorrow morning to discuss safety issues. I will be talking about the importance of safe cycling with special emphasis on the fact that bicycle helmets reduce the risk of head injuries by 85%.

Every morning during Bike to Work Week, free breakfasts and free bicycle checkups will be available at the Victoria Park bandshell at 7 am.

We'd like to thank the organizers for supporting ecological and safe cycling transportation as a way of protecting our planet.

CHILD SAFETY

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): Mr Speaker, I'm sure you have noticed that many members of the Legislature have been wearing green ribbons to commemorate National Missing Children's Day on May 25.

This is Child Find Ontario's second annual Green Ribbon of Hope Campaign. It was organized after some

very tragic events in the city of St Catharines concerning the abduction and subsequent murder of 15-year-old Kristen French.

Kristen's fellow students and faculty at Holy Cross Secondary School in St Catharines, in the riding of the member for St Catharines, developed the concept of the Green Ribbon of Hope to symbolize the quest for the return of missing children everywhere. Green is regarded as the colour of hope and the green ribbon idea has been adopted by Child Find Ontario as the symbol for its campaign.

The Green Ribbon campaign runs for the entire month of May, and it is hoped that during this month we can raise public awareness to the issue of missing children in Canada. Each year in Canada, police receive reports of thousands of missing children who are either abducted by parents or strangers or are classified as runaways.

Speaking as one of the members representing the city of St Catharines, I know this campaign and this month have special meaning for all us, particularly today in light of some of the charges that have come down. We witnessed the effect that a missing child can have, not only on a family and friends but on an entire community. We all remember Kristen French. We all remember Leslie Mahaffy. But we must not forget there are other children who go missing day after day in this country. I do hope that we will all remember them.

VISITOR

Mr John Sola (Mississauga East): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'd like to introduce to the House a member of the Parliament for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dr Ivan Bagaric, sitting in the members' gallery west.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): While the honourable member may not have a point of order, indeed we are always pleased to welcome visiting parliamentarians to our chamber. Welcome.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: My rights as a member to serve my constituents in this House are being seriously affected and my privileges are being denied me in that the elevators in the west end of this building don't operate.

The second point of privilege is equally important, Mr Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Callahan: I don't need the elevator, but I do have people who might be disabled, Mr Premier, who might not be able to get up to my office.

The second point of privilege, Mr Speaker, is that the present conditions in my office, where I have a staff member who is pregnant, are unbelievable. We're not

allowed to turn on the air-conditioners. We were told they'd be off for four hours; it's now going on five days. Mr Speaker, I would ask that you intervene or look into this and make certain that the workplace is made safe for both of my employees, but most specifically for that one who is pregnant who is going to deliver a child in August.

1350

The Speaker: To the honourable member for Brampton South, while he does not have a point of privilege, indeed the matters which he has raised are ones which I take seriously. Indeed, as quickly as possible we will attend to both of the matters which he has brought to my attention, and I appreciate him notifying me of his concern.

It's time for oral questions. The member for St Catharines.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I don't have a question. I stand on a point of privilege or a point of order. That point is, I would like to seek your permission to ask of the House unanimous consent to have the House sit next week so that we can ask questions of the Premier and members of the cabinet so they won't be able to duck out right after the budget.

Interjections: Agreed.

The Speaker: Wait until I put the question. Is there unanimous consent for this House to sit next week? I heard no.

We think it is now time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH CARE

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): I had intended to place my question to the Minister of Health. However, in her absence I will address it to the Premier.

Mr Premier, yesterday your Minister of Health spoke with some pride of a framework agreement that's being negotiated with the Ontario Medical Association to negotiate the quality and delivery and compensation for medical services in Ontario.

There is no agreement now because your government has broken the agreement. Your own Deputy Minister of Health has said that the government would not participate in bilateral negotiations with the OMA, and in fact your government has not set up meetings or provided instructions to your negotiators to do so. You've simply announced so-called expenditure controls that are completely arbitrary, that smack of slash and burn and that will significantly affect patient care.

Doctors in Sudbury are holding information sessions on Thursday and Friday, and across Ontario, people who need emergency services at their hospitals or at other emergency clinics are unsure if doctors will be available since you have cut payments for providing that service.

Premier, you no longer have a working relationship

with Ontario's doctors. Will you tell us what your next step is, where you intend to go and what you intend to do now in dealing with Ontario's doctors?

Hon Bob Rae (Premier): I've just chatted with the House leader. My understanding was that the Minister of Health was going to be here today. I was warned that I would have to answer for several, but I thought she was going to be here.

But since she isn't here, I would say to the honourable member that the last point that you put, that there is no working relationship, is frankly quite untrue. No, no; you're shaking your head. I can tell you that I was, even in my travels last week in Thunder Bay and in Sault Ste Marie—

Mrs Sullivan: How about yesterday?

Hon Mr Rae: Well, if the member would stop heckling me for a minute, I might be permitted to answer the question.

Interjection.

Hon Mr Rae: I distinctly heard a heckle. I would say, Mr Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Hon Mr Rae: It takes more to raise my hackles than a heckle.

I would just say that I think, in fact, as difficult as it is—and I'm not pretending for a moment that these are easy decisions—I do believe there is a strong basis for a good relationship with the medical profession in the province.

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: That's the basis upon which we are proceeding: on the basis of discussion, on the basis of negotiation and on the basis of a serious dialogue with the profession—with the medical association, with the Professional Association of Interns and Residents of Ontario, about the fact that there is a problem which the member's colleague the member for Oriole would certainly know about and which other ministers of Health would certainly know about—

The Speaker: Would the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —and that is the problem of the oversupply of doctors in some areas and in some specialties and the need for us to develop a better way to deal with the allocation—

The Speaker: Would the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: —of this critical group of professionals throughout the province.

The Speaker: Supplementary?

Mrs Sullivan: The Premier's response is so inad-

equate. The framework agreement clearly is not in existence, despite what the Minister of Health led us to believe yesterday in the House. She indicated that the OMA had not agreed to go to a meeting. In fact, it was her officials who did not set up the meeting and set the place. That's the case and she should in fact review her own correspondence files and have a discussion with her own deputy minister.

The Premier also referred in his response to the new doctors who specialize in paediatrics and family medicine and psychiatry who will, according to the expenditure plan put forward by this government, earn only one quarter of their legitimate negotiated fees if they don't practise medicine where and when and how this government wants them to.

Because of that unilateral, arbitrary decision, most of those doctors who are graduating will not be practising medicine, and if they do so, it will not be in Ontario. In six weeks, some 400 new graduates whom we've trained in our medical schools and of whom we have high expectations will have no place to go. They have purchased practices; they will not be allowed to practise.

The Speaker: Would the member place a supplementary, please.

Mrs Sullivan: They've agreed to work with AIDS patients; they will not be allowed to do so. They have contracted to work with children with cancer; they will not be allowed to do so.

The Speaker: Does the member have a supplementary?

Mrs Sullivan: Mr Speaker, I have a supplementary. On June 2, at the Royal York Hotel, the very place where the social contract discussions are taking place, representatives from US jurisdictions will conduct a hiring hall for Ontario doctors in Toronto. Is your advice to the new doctors, Mr Premier, that they should get in line at the US job mart, pack up their black bags and their skills and get out of Ontario? If that's not your advice—

The Speaker: The member has placed a question.

Mrs Sullivan: —what is your advice?

Hon Mr Rae: Let me say to the honourable member, obviously that's not anyone's advice. Second of all, why would the Liberal government in New Brunswick, why would the Conservative government in Manitoba, why would the Social Credit government, as it then was, in British Columbia, why would a Liberal government in Quebec, all of whom have been in office and who have had to address this question, why would all the 10 health care ministers, representing three political parties, as well as the national government have agreed that there's a problem with respect to physician supply?

If the Liberal opposition is saying, "Physician supply? No problem. Medical costs? No problem. Hospital

funding? No problem," the Liberal Party—and we heard it yesterday from the leader—is living in a peculiar cloud-cuckoo-land in which there is no recession, there are no problems with financing, there's no need for a serious reform of the health care system. They're living in a world in which anything goes, let 'er rip, let it all happen. No need for any management; no need for any control.

It is the most implausible policy ever devised by a political party. It might have worked in the 1960s, it might have worked as an opposition strategy in the 1970s, it might have worked as an opposition strategy in the 1980s. I can tell the member, it is not a plausible, serious public policy response to a serious public policy problem. All of her fearmongering, all of the rhetoric, all of the headline-snapping that she might engage in—

The Speaker: Could the Premier conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Rae: —isn't going to work.

Doctors are needed in Cornwall, Dryden, Dundalk, Elliot Lake, Englehart, Espanola, Fort Frances—

The Speaker: Would the Premier please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Rae: —Hearst, Hornepayne, Iroquois Falls, Kapuskasing, Kenora, Kirkland Lake, Marathon, North Bay, Parry Sound, Sault Ste Marie, Sioux Lookout zone, Southampton, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Tilbury, Timmins, Alexandria, Armstrong—

The Speaker: Would the Premier please take his seat.

Interjection.

The Speaker: I ask the Premier to please take his seat.

Hon Mr Rae: So you're not going to listen. They've already made up their minds.

The Speaker: Order.

Mrs Sullivan: The Premier can put that list on the table, but I will tell you, that list is not the list that went to the interns and residents, and they were not told they could practise in any one of those locations.

Let me also tell you that there are three elements in the discussions of physician supply. There is the mix of physicians, there is the distribution of physicians and there is the number of physicians. The Premier uses words. We now have a group of 400 graduates. If there is a problem with physician supply, it has to be addressed at the beginning of school and not at the end of school.

Mr Speaker, I do have a supplementary, because there are a lot of other arbitrary, unilateral, stupid chops and decisions that are being made by this government that bear no relationship to health outcomes around this province.

1400

Let me tell you one of them. This government has

decided that ophthalmologists will not be allowed to do eye tests and to prescribe glasses, although that's part of their scope of practice.

The government has said that no matter what the mental health of the patient, he or she will be limited to two hours of psychotherapy a week.

The Speaker: And the supplementary?

Mrs Sullivan: Those are decisions that should not be made by the minister and the government alone. There has been no involvement with the college, no involvement with CHEPA, no involvement with ICES—

The Speaker: Does the member have a supplementary?

Mrs Sullivan: Yes, Mr Speaker, I do. When did this Premier learn so much about medicare that he can make decisions on his own, unilaterally, arbitrarily, without reference to any expertise? And when did he decide that he can determine how much suffering and inconvenience patients across Ontario can suffer?

Hon Mr Rae: I think patients in northern Ontario are entitled to access to medicare. I don't think the policies that were followed by her government have proven to be effective. I would say to the honourable member that there will be discussions and there will be negotiations, and there will be negotiations and there will be discussions.

There are also, in addition to the issue which the member addressed, over 1,600 doctors who are over the age of 65 in the province who are now billing OHIP over \$300 million.

I would say to the honourable member that there is an issue with respect to the supply and with respect to where doctors are practising and to ensure that the citizens across the province have access to good care. These are decisions that are being made in each and every province. We're trying to make them in an effective way and we are asking and encouraging the profession to come.

I would say to the honourable member, as for the points she's making about, "Well, you might want to do it, but this is the wrong time," there's never an easy time to make these decisions, there's never a time. If there was a right time, why wasn't the member on her feet at the beginning of the year, or three years ago when she was in the government, saying, "Now is the time to deal with the issue"?

The Liberal Party failed to deal with the issue. We're having to deal with it and we're going to deal with it in a fair way, in a fairminded way that addresses a serious public policy problem. That's how it has to be dealt with.

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Bernard Grandmaître (Ottawa East): In the absence of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I'll direct my question to the Premier. Mr Premier, last Friday

your government—

Interjections.

Mr Grandmaître: Oh, there he is.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The Minister of Municipal Affairs is now present.

Mr Grandmaître: Then I'll direct my question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Mr Minister, last Friday you told municipalities exactly how much you would be slashing from unconditional grants, a total of \$110 million that is gone. They were counting on these dollars, but now it's gone.

Now, six months into their fiscal year, you've left municipalities with two choices. One, they can raise property taxes, or they can cut back or reduce services such as policing and transit to an unacceptable level. For example, your cuts will produce a tax increase in Metro to property taxpayers equal to \$200. In my own riding of Ottawa-Carleton, taxes will have to go up by \$100.

For your information, Mr Minister, I think municipalities have been fiscally responsible in the last three or four years, but they are being forced to bear the brunt of your incompetence. They are outraged that these cuts are being dictated to them with no chance to even consult you. You won't even meet with them or your Premier won't meet with them.

Mr Minister, what do you have to say to those municipalities and to those horrified taxpayers who are faced with tax increases and also a reduction in services?

The Speaker: Will the member conclude his question, please.

Mr Grandmaître: What will you tell the mayors or the municipal politicians of this province about your incompetence? How can they deal with your incompetence?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): The real incompetence is the incompetence of the member who asked the question. His figures and facts have no validity whatsoever.

First of all, let me deal with the statement that the Premier won't meet with municipalities. The Premier and I have indicated that we are both prepared to meet with the municipalities, and that has been conveyed to the municipalities.

Since I dealt in the Ottawa press with the misinformation about the Ottawa-Carleton cutbacks, let me deal with the \$200 figure, which is an 800% error that the member has made and indeed that Metro staff have miscalculated. They arrived at the \$200 figure, which was reported in the Toronto Star, by taking Metro's share of \$38 of the conditional, unconditional and social contract and then adding the \$12, which is the lower tier of that same amount, on those same items. Then, on the

assumption that the municipal property tax is 25% of total property taxes, they multiplied by four and they came up with a figure of \$200.

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Philip: Of course, the public school boards in Metro do not qualify for grants, and therefore you can't take back something which they in fact are not receiving. Furthermore, even if the \$50, which is high—

The Speaker: Would the minister please conclude his response.

Hon Mr Philip: Mr Speaker, it was a very long question.

The Speaker: If it is a type of question where there is a detailed response required, the minister certainly can table information. I've asked the member to please conclude his response quickly.

Hon Mr Philip: There is an 800% mistake in the Toronto Star, miscalculations by Metro, and I'm surprised that the member's own research staff did not verify the fact that such a gross error was made by Metro. My staff are working with Metro staff and we're asking them to retract that figure, because they've done a great disservice to the public by issuing that figure.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): To the minister: I asked you the other day if you could explain to the municipalities how they're supposed to function after they've already put their budgets to bed, after many of them have announced and sent out tax bills and said to their own residents that there will be a 0% increase in their property taxes this year. In the case of my own municipality—

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): And mine.

Mr Mahoney: And Margaret Marland's too, of course, and Steven Offer's too and John Sola's too; is that enough?

Minister, in all seriousness, you know they've announced a 1% decrease. Now they're facing the fact that your cuts, done unilaterally, to try to solve your problems, sir, to try to fight the problems of the provincial government, your cuts are being placed on to the backs of the municipal property taxpayers.

Now, you get up and say you had a chat with Alan Tonks and he's not really as upset as he appears in the press. Then we see him on the 6 o'clock news saying he is upset. You say that other mayors around the province have told you that they can handle this. I don't understand this. My mayor, Mayor McCallion, will be here today. I would challenge you to say that to her face, sir. I would challenge you—and you, Premier Bob—to tell Hazel McCallion how you helped her solve her budget problems last year because you in some benevolent way gave the city \$8 million in unconditional grants. I'm quite sure Mayor McCallion will shake your hand and

thank you.

The Speaker: Would the member please conclude his question.

Mr Mahoney: My question to the minister is, what do you say to the taxpayers in Mississauga who are facing either a property tax increase or a dramatic reduction in service in transit, in fire, in public works, in every area? What do you say to those taxpayers, Minister?

Hon Mr Philip: I have no problem in saying anything that is reasonable to Hazel McCallion. Quite frankly, she likes me a lot better than she likes the honourable member, if you want to get right down to it. I'm not sitting around waiting for her to retire so I can run for mayor. Maybe that's part of the reason.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Philip: May I?

The Speaker: Go ahead.

1410

Hon Mr Philip: I don't want to be nasty. The honourable member's a good friend of mine. I like him the same way I enjoy Hazel McCallion's company. But let me say this, Mr Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I don't believe the question had to do with a popularity contest. Would the minister please respond quickly.

Interjections.

Hon Mr Philip: Chris Stockwell is waiting for a compliment, but he's not going to get it, Mr Speaker. That's going too far even on budget day.

Mr Mahoney: This is serious, you know. You're cutting them off at the knees and all you can do is joke around. This is serious.

Hon Mr Philip: It is serious, and I gave the honourable member a serious answer the other day when he asked the question. In fact, I gave him the figures. I showed him that the figures that both he and the mayor of Mississauga were using were inaccurate and I gave him the actual figures, and I said that I was even willing to sit down with him and explain them to him and he refused then to have that explanation.

No municipality is being asked to take a cutback that amounts to any more than 3% of what would be their tax if they did pass it on to the taxpayer. In fact, in the case of Mississauga, that should not be necessary. It's a very, very small percentage of their total operating budget, in the vicinity of less than 1%, and I can tell you—

The Speaker: Would the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Philip: —that in my own ministry we have

taken a 10% cut on our wages and benefits and a 15% on overhead. We are not asking any municipality to do more than this government is doing internally, and I think most mayors will act responsibly on that.

The Speaker: Final supplementary.

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): Well, Minister, some of the people in eastern Ontario may not think as much of you as Hazel McCallion does. From your previous portfolio when you were Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, you are aware of the many layoffs and closures that we have had in eastern Ontario and especially in the Quinte area.

I'd like to relate to you that at a special meeting of the heads of council of the greater Quinte area advisory committee, of which 16 municipalities are members, your government's expenditure control plan and social contract were discussed, and the council represented at this special meeting endorsed the following resolution. That resolution was: "That the greater Quinte advisory committee inform the provincial government that municipalities are not prepared to absorb the provincial cuts and associated costs outlined in the expenditure control plan and the social contract in local municipal budgets."

Minister, I would tell you that every day I have coming into my constituency office people who are losing their houses, are losing their jobs, they don't have food to put on their tables, they don't have clothes for their kids, and yet you are causing them additional pain in what you load them with. I would ask you: How do you propose to assist people in my area to meet these many requirements that you're asking of them?

Hon Mr Philip: The budget will be coming out. It is a budget which creates jobs and will create jobs in eastern Ontario. That's one of the ways in which we intend to assist. Indeed, we have done more to create jobs and to build an industrial strategy than any government ever has. As a matter of fact, there was no industrial strategy before we formed the government, and the companies and the municipalities in eastern Ontario understand that.

The member talks about one municipality that doesn't like sharing the pain. Well, I can tell you that I just received a letter from the mayor of Renfrew saying this is the right course of action to take. "It is good that we finally have a government that has the guts not to mortgage our children." He recognizes that we cannot have 26 cents on the dollar paid to the foreign banks. That's what the mayor of Renfrew has to say, and that's just one of the mayors.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. New question, third party.

Mr O'Neil: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: If the minister had been listening, he would have heard that it was not one municipality, it was a group of municipal-

ities which consisted of 16 municipalities in my area.

The Speaker: That is not a point of order. New question.

FORENSIC TESTING

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): Mr Speaker, I hope you've taken note of the clock and you're putting some time in the bank for the third party in the future.

I have a question for the Solicitor General. In June 1990 the Metro police began—

Interjections.

Mr Runciman: I guess they didn't take up enough time; they want to take up some of our time.

In June 1990 the Metro police began gathering blood, hair and saliva samples from suspects in the Scarborough rapist investigation. Samples from 224 suspects were obtained, including a sample from Mr Paul Bernardo. There appears to have been a 17-month delay between the time Bernardo's sample was obtained in November 1990 and the April 1992 decision of the Metro police to forward Bernardo's sample, along with those of four other prime suspects, to the Centre of Forensic Sciences for testing. More disturbing is the apparent six-month delay between the time the forensic centre received Bernardo's sample and the time it was tested in October 1992.

Minister, do you believe that in a case involving a violent serial rapist, a 23-month delay between the receipt of that sample and its testing was in the public interest?

Hon David Christopherson (Solicitor General): Let me say, first of all, to the honourable member that I believe he knows right well that any matter like this that not only is currently under investigation but in part is a matter in front of the courts cannot be commented on in the House by a minister.

But let me say this in general regarding the kind of testing that the member is talking about. It started around July 1990, indeed, the ability to do that kind of testing, which was new to this province, new to this ministry. There has been a process of staffing up, of gearing up, of being able to do the kind of testing that we need to do, and I think there's an anticipation that indeed as more and more technology is applied to current cases, we'll see more and more of this kind of forensic science taking place with different cases.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): To the member for Leeds-Grenville, I must caution the member in placing his questions that the matter is before the courts and so he should choose very carefully. I realize that the minister chose to reply and I'm not saying that the member is not entitled to a supplementary. What I am saying is that the member, all members, should be aware of the sensitivity of issues which are before the courts with criminal charges involved.

Mr Runciman: Mr Speaker, I appreciate your concerns, but I don't think I'm talking about the particular case. I'm talking about the samples. In this holier-than-thou rhetoric we're talking about, the minister saying anticipation of prompter analyses of these kinds of samples does not address the concerns. I'd like to see some specific response in here today in respect to why that particular sample sat on the shelf for such a significant period of time and what the minister has done.

He has known about this for some time. There were five samples of five prime suspects that were not analysed in a timely fashion. We could be experiencing similar sorts of delays, Minister, and I think it's of critical importance that you respond to how you have dealt with this matter and assure the public at large that this sort of delay will not occur in the future.

1420

Hon Mr Christopherson: Let me say very directly to the member that I think he has an awful lot of nerve standing up there accusing us of being holier-than-thou on this issue or any other issue that's that important to the citizens of Ontario.

Mr Speaker, you have pointed out, I have pointed out and the member knows—he knows—that it's not appropriate to comment on the particulars of a case, and I'm not going to cross those lines.

I have answered the question as properly and as fully as I can under the circumstances, and I would suggest that the member ought to look at his own motivation for asking questions like that when there are serious issues that we ought to be talking about and stop playing politics with those kinds of cases.

Mr Runciman: That's nothing less than a garbage response and totally irresponsible in questioning my motivation in raising this issue. I raised it because of the charges that were laid, I grant you, but I'm not dealing with the specifics of this case. I'm dealing with the specifics of the analysis related to five prime suspects in the Scarborough rapes. Many innocent people were victimized while forensic evidence sat waiting to be tested.

You've been minister now for almost four months. You are responsible. I'm simply asking you today to explain what specific steps you've taken to make sure investigations involving sexual abuse of women are handled in a much more professional and expeditious manner. That's what I'm asking you.

Hon Mr Christopherson: I believe that the members of this House know that I have answered these questions as fully as I can.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Mr Jim Wilson (Simcoe West): My question is to the Minister of Health. All members should be aware that doctors in Sudbury will not be at their offices tomorrow and Friday because they will be holding a

study session at Local 598 of the Canadian Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers.

Over the two-day meeting, doctors will be trying to explain to the people of Sudbury, their patients, what steps they will have to take to further ration health care services in the north. Because the government's expenditure control plan does not even mention underserved areas in the north, Sudbury doctors are being forced to decide what patients they can serve and what patients they can no longer look after.

Minister, your government's slash-and-burn assault on health care has put the people of northern Ontario in a precarious position. Rationing of physicians' services means that patients can no longer be certain that the services they will need will be available when they need them. Minister, why have you decided to punish the good people of Sudbury by subjecting them to this draconian rationing of health care services?

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): The suggestion that we are using draconian measures to slash and burn and ration health care is absolutely ridiculous. What we are doing is reforming the health care system at a time when we are also constraining costs, and we are doing it in a way that shifts a lot of the emphasis from the provision of doctors, hospitals and institutions to the determinants of health by investing in housing, in employment, in training and in a number of things that we know determine the health of the population, as well as making a shift from institutions to community-based care.

With respect to physicians, we have identified a saving to be achieved out of the OHIP system and we have indicated that how that is implemented is open for discussion with the Ontario Medical Association. I can't tell why the physicians in Sudbury, who I believe are responsible professionals, who I think want to and I'm sure will provide health care to their customers, are not using their spokesman, the Ontario Medical Association, as the vehicle for discussing these issues with the ministry. That's what we have suggested and that's what we want to see happen.

Mrs Barbara Sullivan (Halton Centre): Because you won't have a meeting.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. The member for Halton Centre is not in her seat.

Mr Jim Wilson: In 1986, the Liberal government of the day decided to take down doctors by convincing Ontarians that all doctors were fat cats and that somehow they were ripping off society. The bitter dispute between the Liberals and doctors only served one purpose, and that was to give the Liberals an election issue at the expense of the reputations and credibility long enjoyed and deserved by this province's physicians.

Minister, the withdrawal of physicians' services in Sudbury and also in Renfrew is a symptom of the

Liberal-NDP doctor-bashing disease that today threatens one of the most fundamental principles of medicare: accessibility. It is forcing reasonable, kind and caring doctors to take desperate action.

Minister, what steps have you taken to ensure that doctors in Sudbury and in Renfrew are not forced to close their offices and that patients will continue to have access to the medical services that they need?

Hon Mrs Grier: The kind of preamble that the member puts to his question is, quite frankly, very irresponsible and completely misleading to the people of this province who are as concerned about the protection of their health care and of the medicare system in which they strongly believe and support as I suspect the member is and certainly as the members on this side are.

What our government is doing is recognizing that we need to consult with all of the partners in the health care system, of which physicians are a very important partner. We have set up a framework agreement and a mechanism to discuss with those doctors and with their representatives precisely how we can best both manage health care and contain the costs. For the member to suggest that any doctor is being forced to withdraw his services is quite simply and categorically wrong.

Mr Jim Wilson: In response to my question on Monday concerning the government's draconian decision to lock out 2,500 doctors now in training and 400 physician graduates, the minister replied, "I have said, on a number of occasions in this House and elsewhere, that we have made a number of proposals to the Ontario Medical Association, proposals that didn't come to it as any surprise."

My leader, Mike Harris, and I met this week with OMA president Dr Mike Thoburn, who made it very clear to us that the government's expenditure control plan came completely out of left field and caught the OMA and others totally off guard. This fact is again confirmed in a letter I received today from Dr John Wright, who was watching question period on Monday. Dr Wright says the following about the minister's response to my question:

"The minister tried to foist responsibility for the 25% payment to resident medical graduates on the council of the OMA. This is an utter lie. There was never any discussion of a drastic reduction such as 75% discount or that it should be applied to all people in all areas of the province."

Minister, the OMA says that your ministry did not discuss the 75% fee cut for new family physicians, paediatricians and psychiatrists; you say that it was discussed. Minister, who is telling the truth?

Hon Mrs Grier: In view of that question, I hope you will give me the indulgence of reading to the member and to all members from the Ontario Medical

Review of February 1993, which states:

"The OMA has been acutely aware of the rapidly changing health care environment throughout Canada and has been analysing physician resource issues intensively at the joint management committee and at other levels of the association. Building on the direction that it set at its June 1992 meeting, council authorized the OMA negotiating committee to explore the following initiatives:

"more effective regulation of access to licensure for international medical graduates;

"reasonable short-term differentials in the OHIP schedule for first-time participants in the plan which may involve incentives and disincentives and which may be based on geography and specialty;

"reasonable incentives"—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Willowdale.

Hon Mrs Grier:—"to promote voluntary retirement for physicians nearing or past traditional retirement age;

"development of a voluntary retirement pension plan for doctors; and

"financial and other incentives to encourage physicians to locate and remain in rural and underserved areas of the province."

1430

GAMBLING

Mr Carman McClelland (Brampton North): My question is for the captain of the floundering ship Casino, the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Minister, a year ago, in last year's budget, your government introduced the casino project. Since that time, we have been asking you to carry out studies that would indicate the impact of a casino on the city of Windsor specifically and on the province as a whole.

The people of Ontario need to know and they want to know, Minister, what will this do to charities? What will the impact be on the horse racing industry, which employs some 54,000 people in the province? What will this do to crime rates and the policing needs in the city of Windsor? Minister, you've apparently done no comprehensive studies. Obviously, you don't care enough to do that.

I think it's shameful, and so do many other people, Minister, that your government is so desperate for big bucks that the gambling casino may bring in that you're prepared to jeopardize and gamble with the social fabric of this province. Minister, is this just another sign of your government's total incompetence or do you simply not care?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): Certainly, I'm aware of the concerns that the member opposite expressed. He's also aware that we have commissioned a number of studies,

one of which in fact directly involves a study on the social effects of the casino, including problem gambling. We want to assess the readiness of the social service agencies in Windsor in terms of whether they're prepared to be able to deal with any support services that can crop up when you have the number of visitors to a city increasing. It's not just to do with the casino itself. When you have a number of visitors coming, there are obviously going to be some concerns that will arise out of that. We are commissioning a study, and it should be ready fairly soon.

Mr McClelland: Therein lies the essence of the problem with the way you're handling this: You're commissioning studies and you're already well under way and you don't know where you're going and you don't know the impact and you don't know what you're doing. That's why, as you look around you to your right and to your left and in front of you and to cabinet colleagues, they're upset with it, and they know that you have abandoned the ideals that your party once stood for.

Minister, the only reason that the city of Windsor had some hope in terms of the casino project was because it was desperate economically because your government has dropped the ball in a significant way. You've blown it economically; you took away 400 good jobs, good government jobs, Ministry of Labour, that were going to go to Windsor, and you've tossed them aside because you're prepared to gamble and roll the dice with the economy of the city of Windsor. You've left them with virtually no other choice.

It's a desperate move by your government. Sadly, it's a government that used to have some ideals, led by a man who called the former Premier a liar. We know what he said. We know what the now Minister of Natural Resources said about gambling.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member place his supplementary, please.

Mr McClelland: You had ideals, you had something you believed in and you've thrown it out. Minister, is your government so desperate for dollars that you're prepared to go for the big buck of the gambling dollar and sell your souls and sell your ideals and the things that you used to believe in for a little coin?

The Speaker: Does the member have a supplementary? Minister.

Hon Ms Churley: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I think, first of all, that the member really has to put one casino in Windsor in perspective and remember that over the years various kinds of gaming in Ontario have grown. The whole gaming industry in Ontario is worth about \$4 billion today, and that includes charitable gaming, which includes church basement bingos all the way up to big monster bingos; it includes horse racing, which I believe the member supports and so do I and we on this

side of the House; it includes lotteries.

We also know that there are people going to the United States every year and spending \$500 million. Many of them have said they will stay here and spend their money here. We know that Americans will come to spend their money here. There are other jurisdictions looking at and in the process of building casinos.

What we've done is said we'll move very slowly and carefully, and that is in fact what we have been doing. As I said before, we've received praise from around the world in terms of the process that we have followed—

The Speaker: Could the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Churley: —in setting up the casino in Windsor.

SOCIAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Mr Minister, I've received a copy of the letter that you have sent to the mayors of Ontario describing what they should do in terms of the expenditure control program. Unfortunately, it doesn't answer the many questions they're raising. I might also add that the mayors have been given almost no voice at the social contract table.

For example, the mayor of the town of New Tecumseth has asked, can the municipalities negotiate a pause day, a day without pay, a day without work, with their employees to offset the costs of the expenditure control program or do they have to hold that in abeyance to offset the costs of the social contract?

The municipalities recognize your expenditure problems, and many of them are prepared to help deal with those problems, but they're asking, when will you sit down with them, when will they get the answers for their questions from this government?

Hon Ed Philip (Minister of Municipal Affairs): The answer of course on the social contract is that they are at the table. Unlike Conservative governments in other parts of the country that have simply slashed and told them exactly what kind of cuts they were going to take, the municipalities are at the table. They are able to provide opportunities. In fact, the whole concept of that \$285 million is based on the assumption that after those cuts are made they will be offset by various savings within the municipality.

I can tell the honourable member, in terms of the \$4 billion that we have saved, in his own municipality of York the total expenditure control amounts to 1.04% of its total operating expenditures. I cannot believe that in the case of the municipality of which he was the mayor—

Interjection: East York.

Hon Mr Philip: I'm sorry; East York is actually even less than that; it's 0.69% of the operating expenditure—if he had been mayor at the present time, could

not find ways of finding that kind of money.

We're all part of the problem and we're all part of the solution. I'm sure that he, if he were mayor now—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Could the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Philip: —would be working with us to try to find that kind of money and savings.

Mr David Johnson: I'm happy to realize that the minister realizes that I was the mayor of East York rather than North York. But it's a pity that the minister doesn't realize that AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, has said over and over again that it has no mandate to negotiate on behalf of the municipalities. They have said that time and again, but unfortunately, I guess if the minister won't speak to them, then the minister wouldn't know that.

Mr Minister, the question remains: There are questions that have not been answered. The municipalities are looking to have their questions answered. You and the Premier have not sat down to discuss these questions with the municipalities. The mayor of Mississauga is still waiting for a return phone call.

For example, the municipalities are saying, because they're halfway through their fiscal year, will the cuts have to be twice as severe to take that into account? They're asking the question, will the cuts hold in the first quarter of 1994 or must all the cuts pertain to 1993? These are questions they need the answers for. They don't believe that the social contract will be finalized on June 4.

The Speaker: Could the member conclude his question, please.

Mr David Johnson: Again, Mr Minister, when are you going to provide those answers? Will you provide those answers right now, or when will you sit down and discuss these issues and provide the answers to the municipalities?

Hon Mr Philip: The member seems to be getting mixed up between our fiscal year and the municipal fiscal year. In fact, Michael Decker has said that he's quite willing to discuss that with the municipalities.

With regard to his earlier preamble, I can only say that both the Premier and I have said that we're quite willing to meet with the municipalities. I return phone calls to every mayor. I do not have any notice of a call from Hazel McCallion that I have not returned and I can assure you that I always return Mrs McCallion's phone calls; I'd be afraid not to.

Quite frankly, we have a very good working relationship since the time in which I was the Minister of Transportation when I was able to work with her on a number of projects. So that simply is not accurate.

1440

COMMUNITY RECREATION FUNDING

Mr Noel Duignan (Halton North): My question is

for the Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation. While we, at least on this side of the House, unlike the Liberal opposition, recognize the importance of dealing with the provincial debt and renewing our economy, many local recreation departments are having serious problems regarding funding for their recreation facilities.

For example, Halton Hills has been attempting for many years to secure provincial funding for the Acton arena, which is also going to be used as a senior citizens' centre. Because it's so old, they're required to spend a lot of money on annual upkeep, which money could be used towards a new arena.

My constituents are expressing a lot of concern about the impacts of cuts to recreation funding announced under the expenditure control plan. There is considerable anxiety about the effect of this restraint measure on recreation for municipal grants under regulation 797, Madam Minister.

My constituents need some reassurance. What can you tell me and them today about what these measures will mean for them?

Hon Anne Swarbrick (Minister of Culture, Tourism and Recreation): I appreciate that in fact, as the member has stated, there is a lot of concern and anxiety right now in communities across the province around what will happen with recreation grants in their communities. In fact, I met last night with about 150 representatives of provincial sports and recreation organizations and certainly knew that that anxiety did exist in that room.

I would like to say that the staff and the volunteers I met with last night were certainly a number of the many, many staff and volunteers in the recreation and fitness and sports fields across this province who provide invaluable assistance to communities in developing the level of fitness and quality of lives that we share in Ontario.

I think it's fair to say that, both as taxpayers and as recreation and sports activists, they felt quite reassured in fact to learn that what had in the past been a total of about \$12.2 million in the community, recreation and development program funds in the former regulation 517 municipal grant funds is being sustained at a level of \$8.4 million as a result of our expenditure control program. In fact, I think they felt quite relieved to know that that money in fact will be distributed in what we feel will be very fair ways—

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the minister conclude her response, please.

Hon Ms Swarbrick: —that will protect small communities as well as protect groups that are very much in need of that money.

Mr Duignan: Madam Minister, while I appreciate the answer to my question, I still need my answer a

little more completely. Can you please tell me and my constituents the specific nature of the programs that community groups and municipalities will be able to apply for in the future?

Hon Ms Swarbrick: I regret that I can't actually give the proper details right now and certainly wouldn't be able to in the short amount of time that would be allocated here, but I can assure the member for Halton North that we are right now working out the details as to what the criteria for those programs will now be and I hope, over the next few weeks, to be able to release fully what those criteria will be.

RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION REPORT

Mr Joseph Cordiano (Lawrence): I'm delighted to have an opportunity to ask the Minister of Housing a question today. Minister, it's been 10 months since you tabled the Lightman report on unregulated residential accommodation—10 months, Minister—and we haven't heard a thing about this report, a report, I might add, that contains 148 useful recommendations.

As you very well know, the report is very important to the residents of rooming houses and rest and retirement homes. Minister, it is 10 months since you commissioned Mr Lightman to do his report. Can you tell us, how much did it cost to do this report and what is it you're doing with this report, if anything at all?

Hon Evelyn Gigantes (Minister of Housing): I welcome the question from the new critic for Housing for the Liberal Party and I'm very pleased to answer a question about the Lightman report.

As he points out, it is a report of great significance. It is a report which has, for the first time, provided government with an analysis of the rest home situation in this province affecting the lives of about 50,000 people, which puts an economic perspective on the whole situation in which they're living and calls upon the government to take action.

It has 148 recommendations, as he notes, and it has been the subject of very intense work among ministries because it affects interministerial responsibilities in many areas. I'm pleased to be able to tell the member that I expect to be able to move it forward through the cabinet process very shortly.

Just to answer his other question about the cost of the report, I don't have those figures available now. I'd be glad to provide them at another time.

Mr Cordiano: I might say that even the author of the report, Mr Lightman, has roundly criticized your lack of action on this matter. As a matter of fact, Minister, Mr Lightman attended a protest outside your office, I believe it was on May 5, to tell you that you haven't taken any action.

Minister, have you no real concern for the expediency with which this needs to move forward? Certainly you must admit that the lives of many thousands of people,

as you pointed out, are affected. Minister, you yourself commissioned this report which you're not taking any action on. So I wonder, if you're not going to do anything useful with reports, why bother commissioning them in the first place, if they're simply going to sit on the shelf?

Hon Ms Gigantes: I agree with the member that there is no point commissioning reports if there is no action to be taken on them, and in fact I want to assure him that this report is being taken very seriously by this government and will be the basis of action.

I am also very pleased that Dr Ernie Lightman, who has worked on the report, continues in his interest and advocacy on behalf of the 50,000 people who are in a situation which hasn't been examined by government adequately before. I'd like to tell him that when this government moves, we expect to move in ways that will improve the lives of those people for the first time in Ontario.

LAND REGISTRATION

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. Last week, Madam Minister, you told us that the company that's responsible for automating the land registry office, Teranet, is in deep financial difficulties. You assured the House that you would be continuing the process, notwithstanding the fact that RDO breached its contract with the government and has failed to come up with the \$14 million to your government.

My Speaker, Mr Question—My question, Mr Speaker, to the minister is, how is your government going to continue this process? Are you going to allow Real/Data to continue in this arrangement notwithstanding the fact that they have breached their contract with you?

Hon Marilyn Churley (Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations): This is a repeat of last week's question, Mr Speaker. As I said then—the situation is the same as last week—RDO is continuing in its efforts to obtain the required investment to meet the requirements in the partnership. They are keeping us informed, as I informed the member next—last—week. We both seem to be having trouble with our words here today—as I informed the member last week.

It's not surprising. It's disappointing but not surprising in this economic climate that our partner has been having difficulties in terms of raising the funds. We think it is fair to give them some time to work on the problem. It is difficult to find patient money right now—we recognize that—and the economy being what it is, it's a longer-term investment. But they are out there looking for investors, and we are optimistic that they will be found.

In the meantime, the government will continue serving the public, and that's what we're focusing on,

so the public won't be hurt by this.

Mr Tilson: The problem, Madam Minister, is that this deadline has passed now three times, and the last time was Friday. So we've now gone by three deadlines, and this company now owes your government \$14 million. I don't know how many more deadlines you're going to give them. Can you now tell us what your latest deadline is?

Hon Ms Churley: I don't have a specific deadline. We are, as I said, optimistic that RDO can find new partners. The whole concept, the Teranet concept, is a good one, and we believe that, shortly, there will be new investors.

I will keep the member informed and in fact will keep the House informed as to the results of their ongoing looking for investors. But I do want to reassure him that there is no bailout here. The government is not giving the company any more public money, and we are continuing the services that benefit the government and the public in the meantime.

1450

FLUOROCARBONS

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): My question is to the Minister of Environment. My question today has to do with the draft regulations on CFCs that you announced in this House on Monday.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): What are CFCs?

Mr Wiseman: Chlorofluorocarbons.

Minister, as you know, there are very serious concerns that Ontarians have about the ozone depletion, and earlier this week you made reference yourself in this House to the high UV levels that many of us are worried about as summer approaches. I have heard it suggested that the draft regulations dealing with chlorofluorocarbons will not make their important contribution, as you've suggested, in the struggle against ozone depletion substances, in particular because these regulations do not address the problems of halons. Minister, what is your response to these allegations?

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy): The member is quite right. The regulation on CFCs and HCFCs and HFCs will in fact be effective, and it will take about 60% to 70%, perhaps as much as 90%, of the fluorocarbons out of the atmosphere in Ontario and will protect us from ultraviolet radiation. This is of great concern to all us, particularly those of us who have children, as we approach summer.

But in terms of the question of halons, as I said on Monday and told the Friends of the Earth and the industry last week, we are prepared to move on the regulation that will cover halons that are used in fire extinguishers and other solvents that are used in the metal industries, and we hope to have a regulation in place which we will be able to bring forward next fall.

At that point, this province will lead the country and lead most of the world in that we will have covered 100% of the chlorofluorocarbons in this province.

PETITIONS

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): As you know, I have a petition which has over 15,000 names on it, and I have here one instalment that comes from Pickering, Oshawa and other parts of the province that supports the continued operation of Bruce A for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

This is signed, in addition to those who appear here with their original signatures, in support of councils, chambers of commerce, business and labour groups in my riding, and I have affixed my name to the petition.

GAMBLING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas creditable academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

I'm happy to sign my name to this petition.

Mr Paul Wessenger (Simcoe Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which is signed by 190 of my constituents.

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour,

which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: My understanding of the standing orders is that if a member presents a petition, he is required to sign that petition and ascribe to its contents.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The members usually feel an obligation to present petitions when requested by constituents, but there is no obligation to sign or not sign the petition.

GAMBLING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have the support of the member for—no, I won't say that.

I am rising with a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the

time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I am in agreement with this petition and I'm affixing my signature to it.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition addressed the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Frontenac county, members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 431, employed at the Kingston Psychiatric Hospital in Kingston, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I have affixed my signature in support and I'm sending a Decter dollar to the Treasurer.

GAMBLING

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

I affix my name to this petition.

1500

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): On a point of order?

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Mr Speaker, I'm rising once again on the point of order that I just raised with you. Given that my friend the member for Simcoe Centre submitted a petition which I agree with, that is, a petition in effect saying, "We are against the casino legislation of the province of Ontario," I once again refer you to section 36(e) of the standing orders. It says that "The signature of every member presenting a petition shall be affixed to the petition."

I look forward to hearing from my friend the member for Simcoe Centre that he has affixed his name to the petition that he just submitted to this Legislature. If he wants to say that he doesn't agree with the contents of the petition, that's fine, but the standing order—

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Mr Speaker—

Mr Sorbara: I'm sorry, sir, I have the floor.

Hon Mr Charlton: Point of order.

Mr Sorbara: I have the floor on a point of order.

Hon Mr Charlton: You've made your point.

Mr Sorbara: I have not made my point, I say to the government House leader.

The Speaker: Order. Would the member for York Centre address the Chair, please.

Mr Sorbara: I'll just say to you, sir, that the standing order requires that the signature of the member presenting the petition be placed on the petition.

I think it's within the right of the member to disclose, at the time of the presentation of the petition, that he does not agree with the contents of it and that's fair game, but he did not tell us that his signature was affixed to the petition and it ought not to be submitted.

The Speaker: There's a distinction here and it's in terms of the practice.

Hon Mr Charlton: On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Just so we can clear this up very quickly, the member submitted his petition with his signature affixed to it. The table did not return the petition because his signature was affixed to it. The member is not obliged to make that statement when he addresses the petition as long as he has affixed his signature, which he did.

The Speaker: That's correct. The member's signature indicates that a certain person has presented the petition. The member is not necessarily considered as a petitioner. If the member wishes to be one of the petitioners, then indeed the member may affix his signature, in addition to the top of the page, placing it on the other lines alongside the other people who have petitioned.

There is a distinction, but the signature is required simply to indicate that a particular member is presenting a petition to the House, the distinction being between that process and being a petitioner.

Mr Sorbara: On the same point of order.

The Speaker: I would remind the member that the clock is running, but if he has something additional—we're not debating this.

Mr Sorbara: Sir, I think it's only appropriate to bring up points of order respecting petitions during the time allocated for petitions.

In my eight years in this House, it seems to me to have been the practice that when members are presenting petitions they in one way or another indicate their support or their lack of support for the petition. The government—

Interjections.

Mr Sorbara: The duplicity of the government members is apparent in this matter and—

The Speaker: Would the member please take his seat. Indeed it is not necessary for a member, when presenting a petition, to indicate whether or not he or she supports the petition. What is required is to sign—

Mr Sorbara: As long as you want to talk out of both sides of your mouth, that's fine.

The Speaker: Petitions. The member for Bruce.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): I do support this petition and my name is affixed to it. As you know, Mr Speaker, there are more than 15,000 people who have signed this petition.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): How many of the 15,000 are you, Murray?

Mr Elston: Pardon me? Not that many. Actually, this group of signatures is from Scarborough, Oshawa, Whitby, Bowmanville, Colborne, Whitby, Bobcaygeon. I have them from all over the province, and they are in support of the Bruce A nuclear power station. They support it for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

As I've said, along with business, labour, school and other groups, I support this petition and affix my signature.

GAMBLING

Mr David Johnson (Don Mills): I have a petition to

the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

It's signed by 11 residents of Metropolitan Toronto, mostly in the Don Mills riding, and I affix my signature as well.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Wayne Lessard (Windsor-Walkerville): I have a petition from several members of the community of Windsor and Essex County area with respect to Bill 164, and they're petitioning that Bill 164 be withdrawn.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

I have affixed my name to this petition. I support it. The signatures on this particular petition originate from Tiverton, Goderich, Ripley, Mississauga, Kincardine and other places in the province, along with more than some 15,000 other people in the province.

GAMBLING

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has had a historical concern for the poor in society who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly, along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Mrs Marland from the standing committee on government agencies presented the committee's second report.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I'm very happy to present the second report and I hope that the people who are appointed by the contents of that report will serve this province to the best of their abilities.

The Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 106(g)(11), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

LAND LEASE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 MODIFIANT DES LOIS

EN CE QUI CONCERNE LES TERRAINS À BAIL

On motion by Mr Wessenger, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill 21, An Act to amend certain Acts with respect to Land Leases / Loi modifiant certaines lois en ce qui

concerne les terrains à bail.

Mr Paul Wessenger (Simcoe Centre): It's with great pleasure that I've been able to move first reading of this bill, because I think probably the county of Simcoe has the largest number of mobile home units and land-lease lots in the province of Ontario.

The principal purpose of the bill is to provide additional statutory protection to tenants who lease land for use as the site for a mobile home or a land-lease community home. To this end, the bill amends the Landlord and Tenant Act, the Planning Act and the Rental Housing Protection Act, and particularly, it brings land-lease community lots under the protection of the Landlord and Tenant Act.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm wondering, sir, if we could have unanimous consent to have second and third reading of the bill just introduced.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Do we have unanimous consent for second reading? While I appreciate the member's enthusiasm for the parliamentary process, the bill has yet to be printed, so it really would not be appropriate. We need to print the bill so that all members have access to the bill before we start second reading. I'm sure the member's enthusiasm will bring him back to the chamber when we do have second reading.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Mr Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to stand down until 4 o'clock.

The Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent for the House to rise until 4 o'clock? Agreed.

For the benefit of members, there will be a five-minute bell beginning at 3:55.

This House stands in recess until 4 o'clock.

The House recessed at 1511 and resumed at 1600.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

1993 ONTARIO BUDGET

BUDGET DE L'ONTARIO DE 1993

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): Government order number 1.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): Government notice of motion number 1, Mr Laughren.

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Mr Speaker, I move, seconded by Mr Rae, that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): I beg the indulgence of the House to allow the pages the opportunity to distribute the budget.

Is there any member who has not received a copy of the budget? I note that I think the pages have set a new record for distribution of the budget.

Hon Mr Laughren: Mr Speaker, just before I begin,

I wanted to express my appreciation to all of those who helped me in the difficult task of preparing this budget, including my caucus colleagues and cabinet colleagues, but two in particular, the minister attached to the Ministry of Finance, the Honourable Brad Ward, and the Premier himself, for their support and assistance in preparing this budget.

The budget I am presenting today marks a turning point for Ontario. After a terrible battering, our economy is gathering strength. In the past eight months, Ontario's economy has created 98,000 jobs—almost 90% of them full-time. The pace of job growth so far this year is the fastest since 1988.

Ce budget établit une fondation solide pour la reprise économique.

This budget provides a solid foundation for the economic recovery. We cannot build our future economy on a foundation of debt. We must invest in jobs, make government more efficient and put public services on a sound financial footing. That is what this budget does.

This budget will help put more Ontarians back to work.

We are investing almost \$4 billion in capital works—such as highways, transit services, telecommunications networks, hospitals and schools—to create jobs and renew our infrastructure.

We are investing more than \$1 billion in training and adjustment to help Ontario's workers secure decent jobs in the new economy.

We are expanding Jobs Ontario to help communities invest in permanent job creation.

We are going to overhaul the social assistance system to provide more support to help get people back into the workforce.

At the same time, we are putting our public finances on a sound and secure footing.

For the first time since 1942, our operating spending will actually decline.

We are cutting the cost of running government programs by 4.3% from last year's level.

For every dollar in new taxes, there are almost \$4 in savings and reduced costs.

By the end of this fiscal year, the size of government will be reduced by 5,000 employees from two years ago.

Our deficit for this year—which had threatened to climb to almost \$17 billion—has been cut to almost half that level, at \$9.2 billion.

By making government more efficient, we are ensuring that we can keep and improve the essential public services that Ontarians value.

We are maintaining a universal and affordable health care system for all Ontarians.

We are establishing a Royal Commission on Learning so that our schools—which are among the best funded in the world—can fully prepare our children for the demands of a changing economy and a changing society.

We have built and are continuing to support North America's most comprehensive pay equity program for working women.

We have expanded our environmental 3Rs program to promote reducing, reusing and recycling, and we will become the first province in Canada to enact an environmental bill of rights.

We are providing \$85 million this year—twice as much as four years ago—to prevent violence against women and their children and provide services to those who have been affected by it.

This budget includes tax measures that are necessary to put our public finances on a solid footing. I have taken every possible step to make these tax measures fair to the average Ontarian and to minimize the impact on the economic recovery.

I am raising the personal income tax and the surtax. The wealthiest in our society will pay the most.

I am introducing a corporate minimum tax on profitable corporations that pay little or no income tax. All small businesses will be exempt from this tax.

I am closing corporate tax loopholes, eliminating outdated tax expenditures and improving collections. Deductions for expense account meals and entertainment will be cut to 50%.

The retail sales tax rate will not be increased.

I am abolishing the \$5 tax on new tires.

I am abolishing the commercial concentration tax.

Not everyone will like all the details of this package. But everyone should know that it is balanced, it is fair and it is necessary.

It balances the need to invest in jobs, maintain important public services and get our fiscal house in order. It takes a three-pronged approach to managing the fiscal challenge—by reducing the cost of government programs, negotiating a social contract with the public sector, and raising revenues.

This package is fair because it asks all of us to share the cost, and it protects those who are most vulnerable.

It is necessary because we owe it to those who will inherit this province to pass on a strong and productive economy, and vibrant and healthy public services.

We have taken a hard look at our finances and made some tough decisions.

In April I provided the details on \$4 billion in spending cuts for our 1993-94 budget. These cuts, and the additional measures I am taking today, are necessary for one reason: We cannot build a solid and sustained economic recovery if we do not invest in jobs and take

firm action on the public debt.

Excluding sovereign countries, Ontario has become the largest borrower in the world. On average we borrow more than \$1 billion a month. We spend more on interest costs than we spend on our schools. About two thirds of our new borrowing comes from outside Canada—which means that most of the interest we pay on this borrowing goes to foreign bankers, investors and economies.

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Simply to let the debt increase each year at an accelerating rate would be irresponsible. Consumers would know that more and more of their incomes will be taxed away to pay the cost of public debt interest, not just this year, but long into the future. Businesses looking for a good place to invest would be discouraged from locating here. All of us who rely on our health care system and other public services would know that sooner or later there would simply not be enough money to maintain those services. More and more of our tax dollars would go to pay government bond holders in New York, Zurich, Tokyo and elsewhere instead of being invested here in Ontario, in Ontario services and Ontario jobs.

In March I warned that if we did not take action our debt would grow by almost \$17 billion in 1993-94 alone. I said that such a debt load was unacceptable to me and to this government. In this budget I have cut that amount almost in half. There will be those who say that Ontario could live with a \$17-billion deficit. That view ignores the realities of escalating debt and compound interest. With that high a deficit, even assuming that international bankers would lend us the money, our interest costs would take off.

With the actions we are taking today, they start to stabilize. And we will save almost \$5 billion in interest costs over the next three years. That's almost \$500 for every man, woman and child in the province, money that will stay in the pockets of Ontarians instead of going to well-to-do bond holders.

Anyone who has let their credit card account get out of control knows how hard it is to pay down the debt when the interest charges keep piling up month after month. It is called a debt trap, and we are determined not to get caught in one.

There will also be those who say that we should have brought this year's deficit down even lower. But that would fatally damage essential public services and undermine Ontario's ability to care for our most vulnerable citizens. In bringing down the deficit at a responsible pace, I am preserving investments in jobs and I am maintaining the services that Ontarians value most.

To me, the issue is not whether we control the growth in debt. The issue is how. The growth in debt must be controlled in a fair and balanced way, protecting those

who are most vulnerable. It must be controlled in a way that maintains our investment in jobs and that protects important public services and makes them more efficient. It must be controlled by decisions that are made in Ontario and it must be controlled now.

Almost half of the deficit reduction we have achieved has come from our expenditure control plan. About one quarter is achieved through cost reductions that are being negotiated with workers and employers in the public sector.

For every dollar in new taxes, we have achieved almost \$4 in savings and reduced costs. A typical two-income family of four earning \$60,000 will be asked to pay an annual tax increase of less than \$7 a week.

I think that's a fair balance.

Je pense qu'il s'agit d'un juste équilibre.

Our budget invests to put Ontario back to work. After a long period of stagnation and uncertainty, the economic recovery is taking hold. The job picture is improving. In the past year, Ontario has accounted for two thirds of Canada's net new jobs.

Ontario's export-based manufacturing sector, no longer strangled by a severely overvalued dollar, has strengthened. So far this year, Ontario's international exports are up by more than 11% over the same period last year. Canadian auto exports have risen by 26% over the same period. Manufacturing shipments have risen by more than 6%. Who says business in Ontario cannot compete? Who says Ontario workers are not among the best and most productive in the entire world?

Although consumers have been cautious, they too are responding to the improving economy. The Conference Board of Canada's index of consumer confidence rose by 7% in the first quarter of 1993, and retail spending has risen gradually. Investment is rising as business prepares to take advantage of Ontario's solid economic future. Ontario manufacturers plan to increase investment spending by close to 30% in 1993.

Even though the job picture is improving, unemployment is still unacceptably high. That is why the cornerstone of our economic package is to support investment that will strengthen the recovery and create jobs.

Since we took office, our top priority has been to invest in jobs.

Through the sector partnership fund, we are working with business, labour and associations to create and maintain permanent jobs in eight key sectors—automotive parts, aerospace, computing, construction, green industries, residential furniture, telecommunications and tourism—with more sectors to be added in the coming months.

We have negotiated sectoral training agreements with industry, labour and the federal government to provide training and skills upgrading for an estimated 37,000 workers in the electrical and electronics, auto parts and

steel sectors.

We are providing tax support for labour-sponsored investment funds that have already raised over \$100 million to invest in small and medium-sized companies. In the coming year we will be reviewing proposals to expand and improve this program.

We are working with leading financial institutions to establish an investment corporation that will direct critical financial capital and expertise to Ontario's growth companies. There are banks and other financial institutions that recognize they have a responsibility to participate in the renewal of Ontario's economy. Together we are going to provide a means to make that happen.

We are supporting Ontario Hydro's plan to freeze power rates this year and keep increases at or below the rate of inflation for the rest of this decade, providing a crucial foundation for a sustainable economic recovery.

Over the past year, Jobs Ontario has shown what public investment in job creation can do. This program has helped put thousands of Ontarians back to work. It has provided training and jobs for welfare recipients. It has provided work experience for young people. It has built valuable public infrastructure in communities all across Ontario.

In this budget, we are once again investing in jobs.

We are establishing Jobs Ontario Community Action to support community economic development.

Through Jobs Ontario Capital and other programs, we are launching the most ambitious program of infrastructure investment in a generation.

We are expanding investments in training, including Jobs Ontario Training, to support a skilled and adaptable workforce.

And we are revamping social assistance to help get people back to work and to help working families who have low incomes.

Building on the success of Jobs Ontario over the past year, we are creating a new Jobs Ontario Community Action program to give communities more say in their own economic development.

The people who live and work in communities across this province know better than anyone at Queen's Park the economic development priorities of their cities, towns and regions. Jobs Ontario Community Action will help communities help themselves.

We will invest \$300 million in the first three years. The funds for community action come from the consolidation of an array of existing programs and a special allocation of more than \$120 million from Jobs Ontario Capital.

This program will mobilize the strengths and talents of business, labour, non-profit organizations, cooperatives, credit unions, local governments, and other

groups and individuals to get ideas for job creation off the drawing board.

Jobs Ontario Community Action will help fund capital projects that promote new growth. It will offer loan guarantees to new organizations called community loan fund corporations—so that local enterprises will have somewhere to turn when they cannot get a loan at the bank.

It will also support local groups in setting up community investment share corporations, so that local businesses have a new source of equity investment. It will help build the capacity of communities to formulate their own economic development plans by helping to fund feasibility studies and marketing programs. And it will provide targeted support for women, aboriginal people and other groups so that all parts of the community are included in economic development.

The Minister of Economic Development and Trade will provide additional details on the program and how communities can bring forward proposals.

We are also committing \$100 million in capital funding over the next two years to support economic development in the communities affected by the decision to cancel government relocation projects. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade is initiating discussions with these communities to exchange ideas on how this funding can best be used to stimulate investment and create good jobs.

To support further development of the mining industry, particularly in northern Ontario communities, I am providing capital tax relief for junior mining companies issuing flow-through shares to individuals. In addition, we will introduce legislation to allow mining companies to deduct immediately their contributions to reclamation funds for the cleanup of mine sites. This measure will preserve our environmental goals while providing a cash-flow benefit, especially for small mining companies.

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This past year we launched a program of infrastructure investments on a scale not seen in Ontario since the 1960s.

We benefit today from the foresight of those who, a generation ago, planned and built our major highways and transit systems, our schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, our water and sewer systems, and our major public buildings. We have a duty to leave a solid legacy to those who will follow us in the new century.

In February, Premier Rae announced a comprehensive 10-year program to renew the province's infrastructure and create more than 100,000 jobs. These investments, to be made in partnership with municipalities and the private sector, will build highways and transit systems, improve water quality and conservation methods, and expand telecommunications networks.

We have initiated the Jobs Ontario Capital program to make strategic investments that support economic restructuring, promote community economic development, encourage social progress and preserve the environment.

More than 1,700 Jobs Ontario Capital projects have been started, and over \$400 million has been invested by the province in the past year, creating or maintaining more than 8,400 full-year jobs.

To meet the demand for these strategic capital investments that create new jobs, I am expanding funding for Jobs Ontario Capital by \$1 billion, to \$3.3 billion over the period 1996-97.

Some of the major investments through Jobs Ontario Capital include the following:

- The accelerated construction of Highway 407 and the widening of the Queen Elizabeth Way from Hamilton to St Catharines;

- Work on the Scarborough rapid transit extension, the Sheppard subway, the Eglinton West subway, the Spadina subway extension to York University and the Mississauga transitway;

- The new science building at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo;

- The new skills training centre at Durham College in Whitby;

- The Sudbury Southeast Bypass;

- One hundred and sixteen new water and sewer projects to protect the environment and support new development; and

- The Ontario network infrastructure program to improve telecommunications networks that will assist researchers in universities and industries and widen Ontarians' access to information.

We are also working with the private and non-profit sectors to speed up the approval of environmentally sound development projects. In the past year, we have cut the red tape and accelerated approvals for 1,600 development projects with a potential value of \$11.5 billion.

In 1993-94 alone, about 14,000 non-profit and co-op housing units will be completed as part of our commitment to affordable housing in Ontario communities. Last year more than one quarter of all the new homes started in Ontario were supported through provincial housing programs.

Under the Capital Investment Plan Act, we are creating three special-purpose crown corporations to carry out investments in transportation, real estate, and water and sewer services. The three crown corporations will work in partnership with municipalities and the private sector to plan and implement new investments as quickly and as efficiently as possible.

We will also create a financing authority to arrange

and coordinate domestic and international financing for these corporations, as well as for schools and hospitals, and for the provincial government as a whole. The authority will be asked to explore new ways to finance the province's borrowing needs. We want to discuss opportunities to develop domestic sources of capital with the banks, trust companies, credit unions and other members of the financial community.

Nothing is more important to our future prosperity than the education and training of our young people and our workers. They are our greatest resource.

In February, Premier Rae consolidated into a single ministry the responsibility for providing education and training for Ontarians of all ages—from children in kindergarten to adults in the workforce.

Despite our financial situation, Ontario has—and will continue to have—one of the best-funded education systems in the world. We are investing \$9 billion in education and training this year. That includes investments in training and adjustment totalling \$1.2 billion—almost twice the level of four years ago.

We are helping Ontarians to gain the knowledge and skills that they will need to get good jobs. This past year, 353,000 Ontarians enrolled in full-time studies in our colleges and universities—the largest number in Ontario's history. Another 410,000 students registered for part-time post-secondary courses.

Our reforms to the Ontario student assistance program mean that we will be able to help as many as 177,000 students in the coming year—76% more than just four years ago. These reforms will stretch our dollars further and provide the greatest help to those who need it the most.

We must also do everything we can to help Ontarians who are already in the workforce get the skills necessary for well-paying jobs in the new economy. Across Ontario last year, more than 300,000 people received training and placement services funded by the province. This figure includes 88,500 young people and apprentices. This year we will invest \$180 million in jobs, training, counselling and educational upgrading for young people through Jobs Ontario Youth and other important programs.

Through Jobs Ontario Training, which was launched last year, employers have already created over 24,500 new jobs. The first 10,000 workers are working as vehicle assemblers at Chrysler and Navistar, as machinists at Linamar, as seamsters at John Forsyth, as research technicians and chemists at Apotex, and in scores of other firms across the province. A year ago many of these workers were relying on social assistance. This is a tremendous example of what investing in people can do, both for individuals and for our economy.

In the coming year we will more than triple our

investment in jobs and training under this program, to \$329 million. Our aim is to assist another 35,000 to 40,000 unemployed workers. An equal number are expected to receive training through the program's support for those who are currently employed.

We are reducing the barriers that have prevented parents, particularly women, from entering the workforce. The number of publicly supported child care spaces has grown by 6,500 since 1990, to 53,100. Through Jobs Ontario Training and other programs, another 14,000 subsidized spaces will be made available this year, so that more parents, especially women, can participate in the expanding economy.

All this adds up to the largest investment in education and training of any government in Canada. It's good for business. It's good for the economy. But most of all, it's good for people.

C'est bon pour les affaires. C'est bon pour l'économie. C'est aussi bon pour les gens.

While we have taken many steps to help unemployed Ontarians back into the workforce, it is clear that more needs to be done. More than one million people live in households that rely on social assistance for their means of support. That includes a half-million adults who could be productively employed. It also includes one child out of every five. Three quarters of a million Ontarians live in households where, even though someone is working, their income leaves them in poverty.

This year the government will release a white paper on social assistance reform. This reform, which is to take effect in early 1995, will transform social assistance into a system that connects people to education, training, work and volunteer community activity. This overhaul will enable people to move out of the welfare system and into the labour market. We will also address child poverty through this reform.

This budget's investments in people and jobs are an essential part of our vision for Ontario. New industries, new jobs at good wages, young people who finish school with the knowledge and skills they need, and communities that work: That's the future this government is helping to build in Ontario.

Just as we are investing in new jobs, so too are we committed to preserving jobs and public services. Ontario is envied for its comprehensive network of high-quality public services such as health care and education. This government values the dedication and hard work of the people who provide them. Our debt problem means that we have to pursue this commitment to protecting jobs and services in a new way—by seeking a new social contract with employers and workers in public institutions.

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Through the social contract, we are aiming to achieve

benefits for all Ontarians by initiating long-term reforms that will modernize public services and put them on a more secure financial footing. We are committed to restructuring services, redeploying workers to new jobs and reskilling workers as the workplace changes.

For employees in the public sector, the social contract can mean greater job security by avoiding the elimination of between 20,000 and 40,000 jobs. It can also mean a stronger role for workers in decision-making, enhanced rights for retraining and redeployment, and improvements in collective bargaining structures.

For employers in the public sector, the social contract can mean more flexible and cooperative processes for managing change.

For the public who use government services and who pay for them, the social contract means that existing services can be maintained at an affordable cost and that resources can be shifted more easily to provide new services as the need arises.

The government is fully committed to achieving the planned \$2 billion in savings from the affected sectors in 1993-94. In June, the government will publish a detailed account of how those savings have been achieved.

The savings achieved through the social contract and through our \$4-billion expenditure control plan will help us maintain the public services that Ontarians value while making them more affordable.

Ontarians want government to be more efficient. My cabinet colleagues and I are reducing waste. We are putting our own house in order because we believe we must lead by example.

The largest single part of the expenditure control plan—\$720 million—is being achieved through savings on internal government operations. This represents a reduction of more than 10% in the cost of running government. We are streamlining programs, rationalizing field offices and cutting down on the bureaucratic layers that separate senior managers from front-line service deliverers.

We have cut the number of ministries from 28 to 20. This alone means we will save \$40 million this year in overhead costs—\$40 million in savings.

Budgets for consulting, communications, travel and other non-salary costs have been chopped by 24% over the past two years.

By the end of this fiscal year, the number of civil servants will be reduced by 5,000 since 1991-92.

We are establishing separate corporations to manage our real estate in a more cost-effective and businesslike way. We are also introducing legislation that would enable the province, in consultation with municipalities, to provide property assessment services on a cost-recovery basis.

Through these and other measures, the amount we spend on programs will actually decline by 4.3% this year. We are also selling some surplus assets and refinancing others valued at \$915 million, and we are introducing measures that will raise about \$240 million through fees and levies.

At the same time, we are maintaining adequate funding for the services that Ontarians value and that make Ontario a decent place to live. We are making some deliberate choices in how and where we spend. We are investing in our priorities and we are redressing inequities.

We have legislated pay equity for women in both the public and private sectors. We are providing increased funding towards fair wages for women in the broader public sector.

We are providing \$49 million to help meet the needs of aboriginal communities for modern infrastructure and services and to negotiate outstanding land claims and self-government agreements. That's three times as much as was spent just four years ago.

We are investing over \$30 million to protect the environment through Canada's most comprehensive program to promote the 3Rs—reduce, reuse and recycle.

This year we are seeking passage of employment equity legislation that will ensure this province benefits from the skills of all Ontarians.

We have made substantial progress towards implementing the Stephen Lewis report on race relations. Virtually every recommendation is under way or has already been implemented.

For the first time, we are providing stabilization funding for about 20 women's centres that provide support and advocacy for disadvantaged women all across this province.

Our health care system—the service that affects more Ontarians than any other—is an achievement in which all Ontarians can take pride. This government is determined to ensure that, years from now, universal medicare will continue to be a sustaining feature of our society.

To save medicare, we have to make it more affordable. And we are doing so.

We are targeting our spending better by no longer paying for services that have little to do with health—like removing tattoos and reversing vasectomies.

We are encouraging physicians to locate in areas that do not have an adequate number of directors, while restricting growth in cities where there is an oversupply.

We are limiting the use of Ontario tax dollars to buy private for-profit medical care in foreign countries.

We will be reforming the Ontario drug benefit program by asking everyone who benefits from it—drug

manufacturers, pharmacists and consumers—to contribute to keeping program costs affordable.

We are speeding up the reform of long-term care for seniors and people with disabilities so those who need regular care can find it in their community without having to use expensive hospital beds.

In these and other ways, we are preserving medicare by managing our health spending better. We reduced the growth in health spending—which averaged 11% per year during the 1980s—to under 1% last year. That's responsible stewardship. Voilà une direction responsable.

To protect health care and other services and to maintain our investment in jobs, we have made a series of very tough decisions this year. We have achieved \$4 billion in savings through the expenditure control plan. Another \$2 billion in savings is being contributed by public sector workers and their employers through the social contract.

In recognition of these major contributions, I'm also asking for a contribution from the community that benefits from these services.

These tax increases will not be popular, but they are necessary and they are fair. When they are fully implemented, a two-income family of four earning \$60,000 will pay an increase of less than \$7 a week. The total income tax burden on that family will still be the third lowest among 10 provinces. And corporations will pay their fair share.

Those with the highest incomes—the top one tenth of all tax filers who pay the Ontario surtax—will pay the greatest increase. The Ontario surtax rates will increase to 20% of Ontario personal income tax over \$5,500 and a further 10% of Ontario tax over \$8,000.

All taxpayers will pay an increase in personal income tax of three percentage points, to 58% of basic federal tax, effective for the 1993 and subsequent taxation years.

The retail sales tax will be extended to sand, soil, clay, gravel, unfinished stone, parking and insurance premiums. The retail sales tax rebate for visitors from outside Ontario will be ended.

We are not increasing the 8% retail sales tax rate. Instead, we are relying on revenue sources that are more progressive and more sensitive to consumer confidence.

To protect low-income families and individuals, Ontario's tax reduction program will be enriched. This year an additional 40,000 people will pay no Ontario income tax and 10,000 will pay reduced Ontario income tax. Since this government came to office, we have reduced income taxes for 270,000 low-income Ontarians—including 200,000 who have been removed from the tax rolls entirely.

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To stop large, profitable corporations from using the

tax laws to avoid paying their fair share, I am introducing a corporate minimum tax. But in recognition of the importance of small business entrepreneurship, I am exempting all small businesses. More than 90% of all corporations in Ontario will not have to either calculate or pay the corporate minimum tax. The corporate minimum tax will take effect for taxation years beginning after December 31, 1993. When fully implemented, it is expected to raise about \$100 million annually.

Today I am releasing a technical paper that outlines the corporate minimum tax. In keeping with its commitment, the government will consult on the technical details of the corporate minimum tax prior to the introduction of legislation.

I am also eliminating a variety of corporate tax loopholes and reducing the deductibility of meals and entertainment expenses for corporations to 50%. Insurers that have been exempt from the insurance premium tax will now be subject to tax. Along with improved administrative measures, these moves will raise \$145 million in a full year.

To level the playing field, beer and wine made in produce-your-own establishments will be subject to a tax of 26 cents per litre, effective August 1. This tax will increase to 31 cents per litre on June 15, 1994, and 38 cents per litre on June 15, 1995. There will continue to be no tax on beer and wine produced in private homes for home consumption.

I understand that nobody likes taxes, but these tax increases are needed to invest in jobs, preserve our services and control the debt. They are an essential part of our economic and fiscal strategy. They are both fair and responsible.

I am also taking steps to improve the enforcement of existing taxes and non-tax revenues.

In response to the Provincial Auditor's report, this year I am assigning 147 staff to tax collection and audit positions to reduce non-payment of the employer health tax and other taxes. When fully implemented, this initiative will result in the recovery of more than \$70 million a year in currently uncollected taxes.

New fines management and improved collection services are being introduced to improve compliance with court orders to reduce the incidence of unpaid fines and to improve the collection of outstanding accounts.

I am introducing increases in late-filing penalties and interest. In addition, those who evade payment of retail sales tax or engage in tobacco smuggling may now be subject to a maximum of two years in prison.

I am eliminating two taxes that were introduced by the previous government.

I am abolishing the commercial concentration tax effective at the end of this calendar year. This tax no longer reflects the realities of the Toronto real estate market. The last payments under this tax will be in

October 1993.

I am withdrawing the \$5 tire tax as of midnight tonight.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I've never seen such opposition to the elimination of a tax.

Achieving greater tax fairness is a clear and continuing commitment of this government. The Fair Tax Commission is holding public hearings across the province on the entire tax system and will publish its final report by the end of this year. We remain committed to achieving a fair tax system and we will be working—on our own and in cooperation with the new federal government—to make that happen.

For the year just ended, our operating expenditures were \$50.2 billion. That is almost \$400 million lower than our budget plan. Excluding debt interest and social assistance, our operating expense spending last year increased by less than 1%.

Unfortunately, the slower economy meant that our tax revenues last year were below planned levels. The federal government paid only part of the amount owed to us under the fiscal stabilization program, and some planned asset sales were not concluded by year-end. Consequently, our operating deficit for 1992-93 was \$8.4 billion, and our budgetary requirements were \$12 billion.

For 1993-94, provincial revenues will total \$44 billion. This figure reflects the new revenue measures taken in this budget. Without these measures, revenues would actually have declined by \$600 million this year. That's because of the moderate pace of economic growth, the low rate of inflation, the effect of corporate tax loss carrying provisions and the need to repay the federal government this year for income tax overpayments that date back to 1991. In addition, various one-time payments boosted 1992-93 receipts including asset sales and established program financing payments in respect of prior years.

To maintain public services, vigorous cost control has been and will continue to be essential. As a result of the measures announced in this budget, operating spending will be held to \$50 billion in 1993-94, which is \$3 billion below the target we set a year ago. Excluding public debt interest, our operating spending will be 4.3% lower in 1993-94 than it was last year.

Ontario's operating deficit will be \$6.1 billion. Adding in budgetary capital investments of \$3.1 billion, our budgetary requirements will be \$9.2 billion. Despite continuing fiscal pressures, this level is \$2.8 billion below that of the last fiscal year.

Today I'm also presenting a medium-term fiscal plan extending to 1995-96. We remain committed to the goals we set out in our first budget: to reduce the

operating deficits steadily as the economy recovers; to reduce the deficit as a proportion of gross domestic product in total revenue; to keep the rate of expenditure growth low; and to stabilize our debt servicing costs.

We remain committed to balancing the operating budget. Because of the impact of the revenue shortfall, we will balance our operating budget one year later than planned—in 1998 rather than 1997.

The operating deficit will decrease from \$6.1 billion in 1993-94 to \$2.6 billion in 1995-96. Taking into account capital expenditures, the government's budgetary requirements are projected to decrease from \$12 billion in 1992-93 to \$4.8 billion in 1995-96.

In conclusion, the goal of this government's economic plan is to invest in Ontario's future rather than borrow from it.

It is a plan for investing in jobs, reducing the cost of government, protecting services and raising needed revenues.

It is a plan that requires courage and leadership, which our Premier, Bob Rae, has demonstrated in abundance, and I thank him for his continuing support.

All of us look to a future with secure jobs and decent incomes, where parents can afford to raise their children in good health and in safe homes, where children go to school ready to learn, where our schools prepare our young people for the challenges they will face and where older people can enjoy a secure retirement. That is the future this budget seeks to build.

This budget puts investing in jobs and economic growth at the top of our action agenda.

It cuts the cost of government operations in ways that preserve jobs and services.

It asks Ontarians who have the most to pay the most, while protecting those who are most vulnerable.

It provides a fair balance, a balance in how much we cut, how much we borrow and how much we tax.

This budget faces reality. It does not put off the tough decisions until another day.

This budget provides a firm foundation for the economic recovery, so that our economic future and the public services we all value will be secure.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): I move the adjournment of the debate, to be resumed tomorrow.

The Speaker: Mrs McLeod moves the adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Hon Mr Charlton: Mr Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to introduction of bills.

The Speaker: Do we have unanimous consent to return to introduction of bills? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**ONTARIO LOAN ACT, 1993****LOI DE 1993 SUR LES EMPRUNTS DE L'ONTARIO**

On motion by Mr Laughren, the following bill was introduced for first reading:

Bill 25, An Act to authorize borrowing on the credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund / Loi autorisant les emprunts garantis par le Trésor.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Hon Brian A. Charlton (Government House Leader): I move the adjournment of the House.

The Speaker: Mr Charlton moves adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 10 of the clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1652.

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No. 23



N° 23

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 35th Parliament

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Troisième session, 35^e législature

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 20 May 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 20 mai 1993



Speaker
Honourable David Warner

Clerk
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président
L'honorable David Warner

Greffier
Claude L. DesRosiers



Coat of arms

A new coat of arms appears on the cover of Hansard. Presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario by the Governor General on 26 April 1993, it emphasizes the distinctive character of the Assembly and distinguishes the Assembly's identity from that of the government. It was created at this time to mark the bicentennial of the First Parliament of Upper Canada and the centennial of the present Legislative Building. Further information may be obtained by calling 416-325-7500.

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Lists of members

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding and including ministerial responsibilities appears on subsequent Mondays.

Les Armoiries

Les nouvelles armoiries paraissent sur la couverture du Journal des débats. Présentées à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario par le gouverneur général le 26 avril 1993, elles soulignent le caractère distinct de l'Assemblée et mettent en valeur l'identité de l'Assemblée par rapport au gouvernement. Les armoiries ont été créées en ce moment pour marquer le bicentenaire du premier parlement du Haut-Canada et le centenaire du présent Édifice de l'Assemblée législative. De plus amples renseignements sont disponibles en composant le 416-325-7500.

Table des matières

La table des matières des séances rapportées dans ce numéro se trouve sur la couverture à l'arrière de ce fascicule.

Renseignements sur l'Index

Il existe un index cumulatif des numéros précédents. Les renseignements qu'il contient sont à votre disposition par téléphone auprès des employés de l'index du Journal des débats au 416-325-7410 ou 325-7411.

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Listes des député(e)s

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et dans le numéro du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions inscrites dans un ordre alphabétique et comprenant les responsabilités ministérielles paraît tous les lundis suivants.

Thursday 20 May 1993

The House met at 1001.

Prayers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Mrs Witmer moved private member's notice of motion number 9:

That, in the opinion of this House,

Recognizing that the Workers' Compensation Board has an \$11-billion unfunded liability that is growing at the astonishing rate of \$100 million a month; and

Since the average employer's assessment has more than tripled since 1980; and

Since skyrocketing workers' compensation premiums are delivering death blows to many existing businesses and making Ontario less attractive for new business, investment and jobs; and

Since despite this fiscal crisis, the board continues to make questionable decisions, such as the plan to spend \$180 million on a new office complex in downtown Toronto; and

Since despite this fiscal crisis, the board continues to expand the scope of coverage into areas such as unpaid student trainees and chronic stress; and

Since the workers' compensation system is seriously failing to address the legitimate needs and aspirations of those it's supposed to help—injured workers, who experience excessive delays when they file claims; and

Since this crisis at the Workers' Compensation Board is a result of the fact that rather than remaining true to its original conception as a workplace accident insurance plan, the WCB has become a universal system to compensate everyone for everything, in effect, an employer-funded social safety net; and

Since other provinces, such as Manitoba and New Brunswick, have taken effective steps to regain control of their workers' compensation systems;

Therefore, the government of Ontario should take immediate steps to rectify problems with the workers' compensation system in Ontario including an inquiry into the feasibility of privatizing workplace accident and injury insurance. In the interim to control the unfunded liability of the WCB and cost to employers the government should:

1. Impose a moratorium on all new entitlement until there's a plan in place to deal with the unfunded liability; and
2. Follow the lead of New Brunswick and Manitoba and reduce benefit levels and streamline administrative procedures; and
3. Adopt a value-for-money approach to rehabilitation and institute value-for-money audits of the board's

operations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): The honourable member has 10 minutes in her opening remarks.

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have before you today a resolution dealing with the crisis of the \$11-billion unfunded liability at the WCB. It is obvious that there is a choice to be made in this province as far as the future of the WCB is concerned. We either need to change the system dramatically or it will collapse.

We know that there are changes in workers' compensation occurring throughout North America for very obvious reasons, reasons similar to the ones I've already discussed. Costs are escalating at rates well beyond what was envisioned when the programs were established. Employers in this province and elsewhere can no longer support worker benefit systems that they have full responsibility to fund but little input or control.

Eight of the provinces have systems in the red; however, in this province, the province of Ontario, the problem is enormous. It's similar to the \$2-billion tax grab yesterday. That was certainly enormous as well and the highest one in the history of this province.

So what is happening in the province of Ontario? What is being done to deal with this problem? As I said before, the unfunded liability has increased to \$11 billion. It's growing at a rate of \$100 million a month. That is more than \$2,800 for every Ontario worker. We have this situation existing despite the fact that there's been a 92% increase in the payroll tax paid by the employer to fund the system over a 12-year period, from 1980 to 1992. Imagine that: a 92% increase in the payroll tax.

During this period, total accident claims have remained relatively constant but the benefits paid out by the WCB have jumped from \$965 million to \$2.3 billion. Whereas the typical worker lost 23.4 days in 1980, by 1990 that injured worker was away for 43.8 days. The duration of benefits has doubled. Why?

The burden of retiring the debt is now being shouldered by a smaller and smaller number of employees as businesses in this province are closing, they are relocating or they are downsizing because of this NDP government which is not encouraging investment or job creation in the private sector.

The continuing existence of the WCB system is threatened, and yet this government is doing absolutely nothing. The WCB issued a funding strategy consultation paper to deal with the financial crisis at the WCB when the debt was \$10 billion. It has gone up by \$1 billion and yet they have made absolutely no decision

whatsoever. A task force on service delivery and vocational rehabilitation concluded in a July 1992 report that the WCB does a poor job on claims management. Any of us who have constituency offices know that that's indeed the fact. It also concluded that it needs to revamp vocational rehabilitation, that it does not listen to its stakeholders and that the financial viability of the system is questionable.

In response, what did the WCB do? They put in place an action plan that consists of 16 planning groups in order to solicit feedback from its employees. The action plan, however, does not address the issue of the cost of the system. In essence, senior management is refusing to acknowledge the very serious problems. There is no sense of urgency at the board or with this government that these problems need to be tackled immediately.

I find it strange that this government has hired Mr Strong to make structural changes at Ontario Hydro in order to get its \$34-billion debt under control. Why should tackling the debt problem at the WCB be any less important? Why is the government not taking measures to get the \$11-billion unfunded liability under control?

It's incredible: At a time when the future sustainability of the system is very unclear, the board then goes ahead and decides to build a \$150-million office tower in downtown Toronto.

1010

I can tell you that while Ontario and this government sit idle, there are other provinces that are taking action to deal with their unfunded liabilities. Manitoba introduced Bill 59; this overhauled their 1960 statute. It does deal with the emerging trends in work-related injuries, coverage and benefit levels. It does provide fair and reasonable benefit programs. It retires the unfunded liability, and it provides competitive assessment rates.

The bill defines "occupational disease" as a disease arising out of the course of employment and requires that the employment be shown to be the dominant cause of the illness for the claim to be compensable. Bill 59 also provides a definition for workplace stress. Under the legislation, compensation will be paid only in cases involving an acute reaction to a traumatic event.

Let's now turn to New Brunswick. They've introduced a plan to reduce annual operating costs by \$9 million and reduce the unfunded liability by \$35 million. Benefits will be reduced from 90% to 80% of net income, with a freeze on indexation for injured workers now receiving compensation until they reach the 80% level. The definition of "accident" has been reworded to reflect a probable relationship between the work accident and disablement as well as requiring employment to be a dominant factor in the disablement. Stress will be compensable when there is an acute reaction to a traumatic event.

I can also tell you that Newfoundland is contemplating similar changes to make the system more up to date and responsive to the needs of workers and employers today.

However, these are short-term solutions. In the long term, we need to review the merits of privatization and contracting out both the administration and the provision of workers' compensation services. We need to enlist the private sector expertise to develop and implement less expensive and more effective ways to retrain, rehabilitate and respond to the needs of injured workers so that they can re-enter the workforce.

Just before Christmas I learned about a small Ontario businessman who received a 60% increase in his assessment rate. He was now paying more than \$300 per month. When he called his private insurance company to find out what it would cost for similar coverage, he found that if he were not bound by WCB premium and law, he could cover each of his employees for both accident and sickness 24 hours per day, seven days a week for \$105 per month. Roughly, he would get four times the coverage for one third the cost. I know that there's not consensus on the issue of private insurance. However, I do believe that examples such as this oblige us to at least investigate the potential benefits.

At the same time we need to investigate the possibility of private sector training and retraining as an alternative to the current approach, which isn't serving employers or the workers well at all.

Systems also run amok when the rules are set up by a body with absolutely no accountability for paying the bills. When that body is political as well, the results are even worse. That is wrong, and we need to change that system.

We also need to embrace new directions in terms of philosophy and attitudes about workers' compensation. Workers' compensation was never intended to be a substitute or alternative to unemployment insurance. It was intended to financially compensate and physically rehabilitate injured workers until they got healthy and back to work. It was intended as a no-fault alternative to cut out the high court costs of determining liability and to be a more streamlined, lower-cost option that truly served the needs of injured workers. That's not what it is today.

I would therefore recommend that we take the immediate steps that I have suggested to solve the problems of the workers' compensation system. It's time to get injured workers and employers in this province back on track. It will help get Ontario's economy back on track as well, because at the end of the day we're going to have, instead of more costs and bureaucracy, more people working on the job.

The Acting Speaker: All recognized parties in the Legislature will now have 15 minutes to participate in

the debate, after which the honourable member will have two minutes to sum up.

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): I'm very, very happy this morning to be able to speak to this, except that we're splitting it up with three of our speakers; I'll have five minutes, which is not nearly enough, and even 15, if I had it all, would not be enough to go into this.

But I would like to remind the member for Waterloo North that the unfunded liability issue is by far not something that just suddenly occurred in the last two and a half years since the New Democrats won the election, to the chagrin of the opposition parties. I would like to remind you that the Progressive Conservatives, while they were in power—and this is important; I want everybody in this Legislature to remember this—from 1980 to 1985, when the Progressive Conservatives were the party in power, the unfunded liability grew from—now get this—\$800 million to \$5.4 billion in five years, and for the Progressive Conservatives have the audacity to sit here today and tell us that we are not organizing the Workers' Compensation Board is absolutely reprehensible.

Then in 1984 the WCB decided to try to work out a funding strategy, because, gee, \$800 million to \$5.4 billion is a considerable increase, and the business community was not on our doorstep, crying and bemoaning this fact. So they tried to work this out, and again they increased assessment rates.

Then the Liberals won the government, with our help, in 1985, and when they did, they maintained that whole strategy. To their credit, they tried to keep it under control, and still, under the Liberals, the unfunded liability climbed from \$5.4 billion, where the Tories left it, to \$9.1 billion.

We win the election in 1990, and we are stuck with a \$9.1-billion debt in the unfunded liability of the Workers' Compensation Board, and now we listen to the self-righteous rhetoric that we get from the other side on this nonsense.

We are controlling this. We talk the action plan. You don't talk action plan in isolation with everything else. You talk action plan because something has to be done. And who are you going to ask as to how it should be done but the very people on the front line who have some idea and some clue as to what to do.

My time is up. I could go on forever, obviously. I just want to say, though, that this is not a new problem, as I have very carefully pointed out. And the unfunded liability, contrary to the resolution, as the member for Waterloo North has claimed, is not increasing and growing at \$100 million a month; in fact, it is slowing. In 1991 it increased by \$1.3 billion; in 1992, by \$680 million or \$57 million a month, half of what the member for Waterloo North is claiming. In 1993 it's gone down to \$30 million per month, so it is not growing as

is being claimed, and it's certainly slower than it was two years ago before we got into power.

I would say that the employers' assessment rates are not skyrocketing. What have they done? They've frozen the assessment rates. And how have they done that? They have done that with employer consultation, extensively. The business community, unfortunately—and I believe this completely—could be more forthcoming in finding solutions with the Workers' Compensation Board, and it is consulted widely.

We are extremely open. The Workers' Compensation Board administrators have been extremely open with how it deals with its funding strategy. They've made no bones about it. They are trying to clean it up because, in that sense, Ms Witmer is right: It can't continue the way it is. Yet the basic underlying theme we must remember is that worker safety and worker protection, worker rehab and re-employment are the most important things that this board has to look after, and that is what we are looking for.

1020

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I'm pleased to join in the debate on this resolution. I think this resolution speaks about a very important aspect dealing with the WCB, and I believe that many people are becoming increasingly concerned, if not alarmed, with what is transpiring around the WCB.

The first thing that will always be brought forward is the current unfunded liability of the WCB. I don't think the previous remarks by the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour warm the hearts of many people who might be watching, to say: "My goodness, don't worry. It's only going up \$30 million a month." In fact, I think that makes people very cold inside.

What we have to recognize is that the WCB is funded by employers. That is where the WCB looks to get its dollars. When the unfunded liability, the long-term obligations of the WCB, is continually short each and every month, those employers and the many people who still work are increasingly concerned about what that holds for them.

I think it's indeed not very warming that the Ministry of Labour thinks that \$30 million in the hole each month is something which one can be proud of. I believe that in fact that causes some real concerns.

Ms Murdock: That isn't what I said.

Mr Offer: The parliamentary assistant gets very concerned.

Another area where people are very concerned is, where is the accountability with the WCB at this point in time? Where is the accountability for the decisions that the WCB seems to be making each and every day? I don't think we have to look very far in the past to see. The WCB has embarked on a new building, a building which is slated to cost \$177 million.

That building is to house the WCB: 525,000 square feet. It is to be placed in the city of Toronto at the same time that there is between 25 million and 27 million square feet of available commercial space now in the city of Toronto. People are asking, why is the WCB building a new building when there is so much available? Those concerns are rightly made.

Why does the government become so defensive when people bring forward that issue? Why does the WCB become so defensive, when the tenders on the building of the new headquarters were limited, when only three general contractors were allowed to bid, where others in this province were specifically excluded, where not every subtrade in this province can work on the proposed building? The subtrades, as well as the general contractors, are saying: "Wait a minute. Who's running this show? There's an accountability area here and no right to the WCB or to the government to exclude people from partaking in the building."

Mr Gilles Bisson (Cochrane South): You are so self-righteous.

Mr Offer: Members say "self-righteous." You're just full of baloney. People have the right to bid and the right to tender, and the WCB has excluded their right to take part, notwithstanding the fact that the building itself is not warranted.

People are saying: "Where is the accountability? Why is the government consistently turning its back on the actions that are being taken by the WCB? This is going to have an effect on business. It is going to have an effect on jobs." People are saying this day in and day out. They are saying to the government, "Do not turn your back on the actions that are being done within the WCB."

You have a responsibility in the 1990s to be accountable for the actions of the WCB. You cannot turn your back when the WCB is looking at potentially entitling the action of stress without any understanding as to what the financial implications will be for the jobs and business in our province. You have no right to turn your back. The government thinks there will not be any financial implications to compensating stress. There are many people out there and many jurisdictions out there that very much disagree with you.

I believe the member's resolution speaks to very important aspects that have to be dealt with at the WCB. Primarily for me, it is an issue of accountability, that the WCB is operating without any aspect of accountability to the government: It is deciding on the building of buildings; it is deciding on the issue of stress. For me, that, in principle, is troubling, because it is the employers, the people, the private sector, the job creators, the job retainers, that will be paying this. They are saying that if the WCB continues in the same way it has, this will have an effect on our ability to maintain jobs.

The government to this point in time, and especially with respect to the comments by the parliamentary assistant, has said, "Let the WCB order its own affairs." Well, that is not good enough any more. Governments must take a role. Governments must be accountable. Governments must rein in the WCB. It is running amok.

People, businesses and jobs are at stake. It is long past time that the government recognize its responsibility and stops saying that \$30 million, \$50 million in debt each month is good. It isn't. Employers, people, jobs depend on it. Get on with the job.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I welcome this opportunity to rise in support of this important resolution from my colleague the member for Waterloo North.

The essence, the short version, of this resolution is:

"Recognizing that the Workers' Compensation Board has an \$11-billion unfunded liability that is growing at the astonishing rate of \$100 million a month; and

"Since the average employer's assessment has more than tripled since 1980; and

"Since skyrocketing workers' compensation premiums are delivering death blows to many existing businesses and making Ontario less attractive for new business, investment and jobs," and since despite this fiscal crisis, the board continues to make questionable decisions such as to spend \$180 million on a new office complex in downtown Toronto, in essence that's what this resolution we're dealing with here this morning is all about.

The WCB is mired in an extremely serious financial crisis. The last official quote of the unfunded liability was \$10.3 billion, but it is growing at a rate of \$100 million a month and it will exceed the \$11 billion that I had indicated.

That debt represents about \$45,000 for each firm currently registered with the WCB. Ontario's employers are facing serious issues, ranging from increasing assessment rates, compensation for stress, the building of a new WCB shrine and the NDP government's move to revamp the workplace accident fund into a universal insurance system.

In 1984, the WCB realized that the yearly assessments charged employers were inadequate to cover accident costs and the board adopted a full-funding strategy to ensure that its assets could match its liabilities at some future date. The funding strategy was to raise assessment rates to levels adequate to cover current and future costs of every year's new accidents and to generate a surplus above this amount sufficient to retire the unfunded liability within 30 years.

So between 1984 and 1989, the WCB strategy to eliminate the unfunded liability was on track. But during 1990, things took a turn for the worse, and the unfunded liability increased more than was anticipated because Bill 162, introduced by the Liberals in 1989,

added nearly \$1 billion to the board's total liabilities and the recession reduced revenues. The recession led to an 11% decrease in employer assessment in 1990 and 1991. It should be noted that the WCB gets 75% of its overall revenues from the manufacturing sector and from the construction and natural resource industries, which have all been especially hard hit by this current recession. These three sectors are not expected to regain their 1989 employment levels until at least 1995 at the very earliest.

While all this was happening, total WCB expenditures—claims costs plus overhead—increased by 20%.

1030

Our caucus realized that the WCB was in crisis and out of control as far back as before 1991. In fact two of my colleagues, the member for Wellington and the member for Lanark-Renfrew, issued a minority report and their opinion and recommendations of what our party members on the standing committee on resources development—they reported on the service delivery at the Workers' Compensation Board. Keeping in mind that that was 1991, I think you will agree that the recommendations made for interesting reading.

The two PC caucus members of the committee recommended that:

(1) The Provincial Auditor be immediately commissioned to conduct a value-for-money audit of the Workers' Compensation Board.

(2) Upon completion of the operational review and before any additional resources are allocated to such major activities as claims adjudication, assessment and rehabilitation, the chairman of the WCB should table in the House a detailed cost-benefit analysis of the proposed policy changes. That would include specific justification for any increases in staffing levels.

(3) Before the Minister of Labour allocates additional resources to the office of the worker adviser to establish satellite offices to augment its 13 regional offices that would reduce the considerable WCB workload faced by MPP constituency staff, the minister should table in the House a detailed cost-benefit analysis.

(4) A moratorium on all WCB policy changes until 1993 be established.

(5) Any future changes to the scope of coverage, including workplace stressors and non-causal effect for occupational disease, should be fully and publicly debated in the Legislature.

These are some of the recommendations that were made by my colleagues, and that is why I am supporting this commonsense resolution from my colleague the member for Waterloo North. I want to thank the member for Waterloo North for bringing this important issue to the attention of the Legislature this morning, and I urge all of my colleagues to give her resolution the full support that it richly deserves.

Mr David Winninger (London South): I am certainly pleased to rise today and speak in response to the resolution of the member for Waterloo North. I, like all members in the House, have constituency offices that deal with workers' compensation claims on a daily basis, and we all have an interest in improving the way the system works.

Certainly the member for Sudbury has acknowledged the size of the unfunded liability and has illustrated to the members of the House how that unfunded liability ballooned under the Conservative and the Liberal administrations.

Since we took over office in 1990, there has been only a modest growth in the unfunded liability, largely, I might say, due to the effects of this recession, which has been prolonged by unfavourable policies from the big brothers and sisters of the Conservative Party in Ottawa.

But I disagree with the member for Waterloo North that the solution to the problem faced by the WCB is one of increased privatization. I think it's useful to look back on the historical antecedents of the present Workers' Compensation Board.

Most of us are aware that the board was established in 1914 with the acknowledgement and recognition that industrial accidents have to be treated differently from other accidents because employees are working under the direction and for the benefit of employers. In order to ensure that there is a fair balance, if you will, between the right of the employer to predictability of premiums, risk distribution and resolution of claims on a no-fault basis—balanced against that is the right and entitlement of the worker to assured benefits, pension entitlements, without having to resort to costly and time-consuming litigation. So there are benefits on both sides. Over the years since 1914, governments, business and workers have all contributed towards the evolution of the workers' compensation system as we know it today.

Today the WCB, as you know, Mr Speaker, is operated as an arm's-length agency of government. That, I would submit, is probably the best way we have of ensuring a fair balance between the interests of employers, who, as the member for Mississauga North indicated, are assessed for contributions, and the rights of workers to fair and timely compensation for their injuries.

If we were to accept the submission of the member for Waterloo North that the system would improve through privatization, that would take a grand leap of faith. We all know that the workers' compensation system has some problems, and those problems were highlighted by the task force on vocational rehabilitation and service delivery last year.

The Workers' Compensation Board in fact has taken

some very strong steps to redress some of the imperfections that were highlighted in the report of the task force. So there is an effort on behalf of the Workers' Compensation Board to rein in that unfunded liability and to take positive steps to improve service delivery and to increase access to vocational rehabilitation, all of which will result in the kind of economies that will bring down the rate of increase in unfunded liability.

To get back to the matter of privatization, a 1990 study sponsored by the Conservative government in Alberta suggests that privatization won't bring down the costs. The study—which consisted only of employer representatives, I might add—concluded that workers' compensation compares most favourably to private insurance. The workers' compensation is much cheaper for most small businesses than would be private insurance. In fact some businesses that may be considered high-risk businesses may be written off by the private insurance sector completely.

We also know that in the US, where hundreds of private companies provide compensation to workers, the costs are really quite significant. Of every dollar that's paid by an employer south of the border towards workers' compensation insurance, only 50 cents goes into benefits and pensions to the workers. Under our system, only 15 cents of each assessment dollar goes towards administration, litigation and so on; the other 85 cents goes back to the worker.

I would submit that our workers' compensation system, while acknowledging its defects, is taking some very bold steps towards reining in the unfunded liability, improving service delivery, increasing access to vocational rehabilitation and, for that reason, I won't be supporting the member's resolution.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): One of the things I find most interesting about this debate is that everybody agrees that the Workers' Compensation Board is in a shambles. They do. I even hear members opposite at least recognizing some serious problems with the board, with the administration, with the whole system. The employers will tell you that it's an absolute nightmare.

The rates may currently be frozen, but rumour has it that someone in some office somewhere is working on some new rates, and those new rates, which I understand are going to be announced in the very near future, will be very much like the market value assessment battle that took place throughout Metro, where what we're going to see is that certain sectors are going to get reductions in their rates, but other sectors are going to get substantial increases.

1040

You can just imagine where some of the increases might occur. They might affect our industrial base. They might affect the very people who need—

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): There is no industrial base left.

Mr Mahoney: There isn't much of one, but there is a little bit of an industrial base. They might affect the very people who are hanging on by their fingernails and will survive the next two years till we get a change in the government and a change in the philosophy. It just might affect those particular individuals.

The track I wanted to speak about is, ask your constituency assistants—I'm sure you have—what is the one issue they spend the vast majority of their time on. It's workers' compensation claims on behalf of the workers who are trying to get some money, who are trying to survive out there, who have to go through an incredible bureaucracy, who keep getting sent back to the doctor for updates, for more information, and at the end of the day don't get the money.

One of the things that concerned me about the member's resolution was the danger of trying to solve the workers' compensation problems on the backs of the workers being compensated, and you would in effect do that if you simply reduced the benefits. I had some concerns when I was looking at this as to whether or not I was prepared to support it. It's somewhat typically Tory to say, "Let's make the workers pay for the solution to the problem."

But then I thought, "I wonder if the workers would accept reduced benefits if only they could get them." Interesting, because a reduced benefit, when you put that together with the streamlining of the administrative procedures which are referred to in the member's resolution, then maybe the worker would say, "Gee, I'd rather at least get a cheque." You can't buy groceries with promises and with a constituency assistant who's ready to jump out the window because he can't solve the problems on behalf of the injured worker.

They'd like something, so maybe the lead that the member talks about in New Brunswick and Manitoba of reducing the benefits, if it truly went hand in hand with streamlining the procedures, with making this truly what it was designed to be, that is, a benefit facility for the people who are injured on the job—

I think frankly there's enough blame to go around. All of us in this House can share the blame. The members opposite say the unfunded liability has only grown a little bit. Well, in two years it's grown by I guess \$2 billion. A billion dollars a year is more than a little bit. I recognize in Queen's Park jargon, in budget talk, that the term "What's a billion?" gets thrown around a little bit. Who really cares about \$1 billion?

We're talking about a program growing with an unfunded liability, in essence a debt; not a debt that has to be paid today, but a debt that is accruing at an enormous amount monthly. We hear the parliamentary assistant say \$30 million a month, we hear the critic for

the Conservatives say \$100 million a month. Whichever one it is, it's unacceptable.

I wish that we could take the partisanship out of the debate on workers' compensation, because in every one of our offices you don't put up a sign that says this is an NDP office or this is a Liberal or Conservative office; you put up a sign that says, "This is an MPP's office." You are there to serve all of your constituents regardless of their political affiliation. The reality is, the majority of your constituents and mine are not affiliated with any political party. They just have to get through the day. They have to figure out how they can pay the taxes that every level of government is burdening them with.

So why shouldn't we, collectively as a Legislature—I asked myself when I looked at this resolution—support this? The only point that concerned me was the potential to solve it on the backs of the workers, but I've come to the conclusion, having talked to injured workers, having talked to my staff, that those injured workers would support this resolution. Those injured workers would absolutely say that it is time to change workers' compensation.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): Who have you been talking to?

Mr Mahoney: I talk to them all the time, trust me.

The problem is that this party philosophically thinks it owns injured workers.

Mrs Witmer: They don't.

Mr Mahoney: Well, that's what they think. They think they own the Workers' Compensation Board. The people own the board, the people who have to pay for it, the people who need the benefits out of it, their families, the public. You can pretend that it's some arm's-length agency, but it's all one taxpayer. That's all there is: one taxpayer. That injured worker absolutely wants to get rehabilitated, wants to get their injury resolved and wants to get back to work.

I frankly think that if you said to an injured worker, "Tell you what: We're going to reduce your benefits by 10%, but we're going to give them to you," that's the difference. "We're not going to make you fight and scrap and yell and scream and cry and wait and borrow money and cash in bonds or RSPs or sell your car to live; we're going to actually make sure the money flows directly to you." I frankly think that the honourable member for Waterloo North intends that to be the case when she talks about reducing benefit levels and streamlining administrative procedures. I could not support a simple reduction if it did not go hand in hand with improving the administration.

Let me briefly talk about this building. The members opposite also get defensive; really quite interesting. How can you justify? In today's economy, last year's economy or the year before's economy, prior to the

decision being made—the decision to build the building was made during this government's tenure, absolutely no question; the facts are irrefutable—how can you justify? We knew there was a recession. You knew there was a recession.

The board says, "We need special elevators." I don't know; do they go sideways, or do they go up and down in that building the same as other buildings? Maybe there's a trick to them. Maybe they've got back supports on the walls in the elevators to help the injured workers. I really don't know. They need some special offices that they couldn't find in a plethora of empty buildings all over the province. Who said it had to be in downtown Toronto? We could have found it anywhere, in any of our communities, to rent a building at a much more affordable rate.

I have decided I'm going to support this resolution, and hopefully we can all stop the politics and get on with trying to help the injured workers of this province.

Mr Carr: I first of all would like to thank the member for Waterloo North for putting forward this resolution, and also thank my two colleagues, the members for Wellington and Lanark-Renfrew, who would like to take a little bit of time to talk about what they have done in committee regarding this issue.

I have in my hand about 80 replies from businesses of what they think of the WCB. I could probably go an hour and a half talking about what they say some of the problems are, but in the short time, in the few minutes I have here, I won't. But in here there are comments talking about the system and how it's totally out of control. Some of the comments are: "Change the thinking with a sledgehammer," "Get on with it; we're almost bankrupt."

We have put forward the solutions, as we have in all areas. In our minority report on the pre-budget, we put in there things about the WCB. Rather than just criticizing, and "Things are terrible," we offered some solutions in our minority report and in the report done in the resources committee. It's been followed up by the member.

I'll give a couple of examples of why we're out of control. First of all, I don't know if many people realize as we sit here today in this province, we have two cabinet ministers sitting who are collecting WCB pensions in the province of Ontario, two of them are collecting right now. They're okay to sit in the Cadillacs and ride around in the province, but they're collecting WCB pensions in the province of Ontario. They're okay to work, they're okay to sit in the back of a Cadillac and ride around in the province, but they are, right now, in the province of Ontario, sitting here, able to work perfectly in their jobs—I would say that they can't do their jobs properly not because of their injuries but because of their competence. But here we are in the province of Ontario with two NDP cabinet ministers

who are now collecting WCB pensions, and yet they can work as cabinet ministers. That's what's wrong with the system.

1050

I want to give you another quick example, because I know there are only a couple of seconds left. As the members know, I used to play hockey. I was down in Rochester about two months ago at an oldtimers' hockey game and there was a player there who was injured while playing hockey. I won't mention the town he works for, but he works for one of the communities in the province of Ontario. He was injured playing hockey at night. We paid probably about \$2,000, \$3,000 to fix his knee. What he did is, he said he limped into work the next day and said that he got hurt on the job, and for eight months he collected WCB. Of course, he was proud to tell all the players down there in Rochester that this is what he did, and then he asked me what I did as an MPP, and I told him, "We spend about 60% of our day trying to catch crooks like you who are abusing the system."

We have a business community out there right now that is reeling, worse so now after the tax increases. They can't keep up. I'm going to send the member for Sudbury copies of these statements of what was done and what businesses are saying—absolutely furious with what is happening.

Unlike other political parties where we just criticize and say it's terrible, it's the NDP's fault or it's George Drew's fault or it's Leslie Frost's or it's Peterson's fault, we put together our solutions. The members for Lanark-Renfrew and Wellington put together a report, and as he's going to tell you very shortly, within a minute or so, this government didn't even have the courtesy to reply to them on what they had done. They put solutions together; worked very hard. You might not have agreed with everything, but this government on the other side didn't even have the courtesy to reply to them on it. I say to the member for Sudbury, when members of this Legislature put together practical solutions, not all of them that you agree with, maybe one or two, you should at least have the courtesy to reply to those people.

I wish I had the opportunity to go through some of the criticisms that are in here that business people sent in. And these aren't big businesses—most of them are two-, three-, four-, five-people operations, saying our plan is right on. They're saying, "For the first time, we've got politicians who are offering solutions rather than just criticizing." Eighty replies right here that I will send to the member for Sudbury East, and I hope she will take a look at them and see the anger out there in the province of Ontario regarding the WCB.

So we offered some solutions. You might not always agree, but we are trying to be constructive in putting them together, and I think you owe the member for

Wellington and the member for Lanark-Renfrew at least the courtesy of replying to the hard work they did in the report.

We've offered some of the solutions. If we don't do something, the ironic thing about this is, as we found out before, all the good intentions in the world won't matter. The people, if we don't deal with the unfunded liability, are going to suffer; not the corporations and the businesses that are going to go out of business and move away. When the unfunded liability gets run up and the cheques start bouncing from WCB for the injured workers, that's what's going to happen. You came in here thinking that all the money in the world, all the good intentions were going to be worth it. What we found out is, all the good intentions in the world, all the philosophies won't count if you run out of money.

If you don't deal with it now, whether it's two, five years down the road, there's going to be no money for those injured workers. They're the ones who are asking you to do something. We're offering some practical, commonsense solutions. You don't need to take 100% of them, but look at some of the ideas, because ultimately at the end of the day it isn't us that's going to benefit. Well, the two cabinet ministers that are receiving pensions are going to be out of luck too. But the injured workers are going to be the ones who will not be able to receive any money because you've run out of money because nothing was done, and that will be a shame.

Mr Speaker, I will save two minutes. I'd like the member for Lanark-Renfrew to talk about the report and the hard work they did. Hopefully at the end of the day this government is going to listen, because if not, businesses and the injured workers are going to be the ones who are going to suffer.

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): It's a pleasure to rise in response to the resolution from the member for Waterloo North.

In response to the previous two speakers, it seems that they're taking the traditional Conservative and Liberal approach of blaming the victim. In contrast, our government is taking the positive approach towards the WCB and the workers who are injured on the job. The ultimate solution to this whole thing is to eliminate all workplace injuries and disease.

Our priority is prevention. It's in the best interests of both employers and employees to have a safe and healthy work environment. Our focus should be on training and awareness through educational initiatives such as workplace health and safety, certification of these committee members through the workplace hazardous materials information system—the WHMIS program—and other educational courses and programs.

We believe in investing in people, and all people deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. To cut

the benefit level of the injured worker, to adopt a value-for-money approach, dehumanizes the system and the needs of the victim. Suggesting cuts in benefits and entitlement rights is to take an unfair and unrealistic approach to a serious need. Injured workers should not have to face drastic cuts in income and lifestyle just because they are hurt on the job. Suffering and injury are sacrifice enough.

As the workplace changes from primarily blue-collar to white-collar jobs and as we discover more about the links between the workplace and various injuries and illnesses, workers' compensation has evolved to take into account occupational disease and repetitive strain injuries. However, to be compensated, a clear link between workplace and injury has to be established.

We must meet the needs of workers in Ontario. The entitlements also must meet the needs of the workers injured on the job. The government is working with the Workers' Compensation Board to meet the challenges of controlling costs and improving services.

Of course, it's critical that we prevent workplace accidents in the first place. Our government recently passed regulations to protect health care workers in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care facilities. The Workplace Health and Safety Agency has been helping workers and employers prevent workplace accidents and illnesses, and we've been imposing heavy fines on those who break Ontario's health and safety laws.

Our government is assisting and encouraging injured workers to get together to help themselves. Through this network they are more able to assist others, to lend support, consult and offer avenues for outside help; working together to lead productive and more satisfying lives.

Through the consultation process, we are working towards ways to reduce the unfunded liability—I might add, the unfunded liability that was inherited from previous governments. It was the Tories who allowed unfunded liability to reach the point that it has, by keeping assessment rates artificially low. Once again our government is faced with cleaning up after previous governments.

Through clear, concise initiatives, our government is investing in people, the workers in Ontario, their jobs and in our future. With forethought we are planning for the future. We are making decisions that are directly linked to our future, the macro-picture. Previous governments have only viewed the micro-picture.

To say the workers' compensation system is failing to address the needs of injured workers is a fallacy. By broadening the entitlement to include chronic stress and student trainees, to name a few, is to take a realistic approach to the workplace of the 1990s.

It is the right of every individual to a safe and healthy work environment. When these rights are denied or overlooked, we must all take responsibility to work together to improve the situation or to remove the barriers.

Again, this is why the establishment of joint health and safety committees is so important. Through education, employers and workers alike will become more aware of safer work habits and practices.

We must vote against this resolution as it serves only to restrain and add further hardship to those who have suffered already. We must remain positive in our approach by encouraging safer practices by both employers and workers and by recognizing the changing design of the workplace in Ontario.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): I would just like to take a couple of minutes to remind the member for Sudbury, who has spoken so strongly on this resolution this morning, of her days on the standing committee on resources development when we did in fact look very deeply into the operation of the Workers' Compensation Board and we did spend a lot of time and we did identify the problems.

At that time, the whole issue was to be solved by the appointment of this new chairman and chief executive officer. We gave that new administration a definite length of time to assess the problems at the Workers' Compensation Board and report back to the resources committee.

The member for Sudbury knows very well we did not receive a report back. We did not receive anything, and when the Minister of Labour was asked in the House why he wasn't taking some action, his answer to us has been that he doesn't have the power to take the action. Well, if that's the situation, I would suggest we'd better look at legislation to give him some power to take the action.

At least he could ask the public auditor to come in and review the situation. He does have that power. But to just sit back and say: "My hands are tied. It's an independent organization. I can't do anything"—and now recently in the House he's been supporting the idea of building a new building with all the vacancies we have downtown, for the simple reason that they say access in these buildings is not suitable for people to come to the offices of the Workers' Compensation Board.

This member for Sudbury knows very well what the problems are over there. Think of the number of people we interviewed. Think of the people who came forward with ideas on how to correct the situation, and think of the employer, who is really saying to us very clearly that if we don't do something, the whole Workers' Compensation Board will be bankrupt and there won't be such a board.

1100

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member for Waterloo North has two minutes in response.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker: The member for Downsview, if indeed he wants to participate, has a very short time.

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): Absolutely. I think it's important to get on the record, in the 30 seconds we have left, that in response to some of the comments that were made here this morning, the only thing you can say is, "Poor workers, poor injured workers." If there is ever a shift in governments in this province and, God forbid, if the Conservatives or Liberals ever were elected, I would say, "Poor workers, poor injured workers," because they would be in big trouble indeed.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. This completes the time for all parties. Mrs Witmer has two minutes in response.

Mrs Witmer: I'd like to thank the members for Mississauga North and Mississauga West for supporting the motion I've put forward today, also my colleagues from Simcoe East, Oakville South and Lanark-Renfrew for the support they've given to this motion.

I'd like to indicate to the parliamentary assistant and the members for London South and Kitchener-Wilmot that the reason I have placed the motion and the resolution here today is because the WCB is not—and I stress, it is not—responding to the needs of the injured workers. We all know that because of the tremendous workload we have in our constituency offices.

I can assure you, if you do not take action to reduce the \$11-billion unfunded liability right now and adopt the recommendations that I have put before you today, there will not be any money in the future to deal with the problem. I ask that the government seriously look at these recommendations or the system will collapse and for injured workers in this province there will be no benefits whatsoever, because you are looking at expanding entitlement and you are not taking into consideration the impact of that on the employers in this province. I can assure you that employers in this province are now looking at WCB as one of the great costs of running business in this province. In fact, I know of one business that decided not to locate here because of the WCB costs.

So in conclusion, I say this to you: I would suggest that you've had almost three years to make some changes at the WCB. The PC Party did have a plan of action to get rid of the unfunded liability. Unfortunately, the Liberals and now the NDP have thrown that into turmoil. I would suggest to you, help injured workers and make changes at the WCB.

The Acting Speaker: This completes the time allotment for ballot item number 9, Mrs Witmer's

private member's motion. We will further deal with this motion at 12 noon.

CANADIAN FILM INDUSTRY

Mr Farnan moved private member's notice of motion number 8:

That, in the opinion of this House:

(1) Recognizing that our identity as citizens of this province is dependent also on our national identity as Canadians; and

(2) Recognizing that Ontarians need and want Canadian commercial films which reflect and help shape the unique lives and dreams of Canadians; and

(3) Recognizing that the production of such films is dependent on a viable national film industry and the development of a distinct Canadian market for commercial films; and

(4) Recognizing that the distribution sector is crucial to the health of the film industry, since distributors not only feed the markets but also finance film production by reinvesting these profits in new commercial films; and

(5) Recognizing that at this time, the major US distributors control the Canadian feature film market and, as a result, only 4% of screen time in Canadian movie theatres is devoted to Canadian-made movies; and

(6) Recognizing that the US film industry has always seen Canada as part of the US domestic market; and

(7) Recognizing that the 1988 Canada-US free trade agreement and the proposed North American free trade agreement specifically provide that Canadian and provincial governments have the right to take steps to nurture a distinct national culture and protect Canadian sovereignty in this area; and

(8) Since Canadian distributors, most of whom are based in Ontario, are ready and able to buy separate Canadian distribution rights to successful foreign and independently produced American commercial films;

The government of Ontario should work with other provincial governments to urge the federal government to:

(1) Establish a nationwide licensing system that would,

(a) give Canadian distributors open access to independently produced commercial films; and

(b) limit the Canadian distribution rights of foreign distributors to films on which they were intended to hold the original copyright or on which they hold the world rights; and

(2) promote as an issue to be addressed in future interprovincial trade talks the elimination of barriers between provinces that currently prevent Canadian film distributors from having equal access to all Canadian markets;

And further, the government of Ontario should:

(3) Use its regulatory powers under the Theatres Act to establish a system of general and special distributor's licences within Ontario that would,

(a) give Canadian distributors open access to independently produced commercial films; and

(b) limit the Canadian distribution rights of foreign distributors to films on which they were intended to hold the original copyright or on which they hold the world rights; and

(4) continue to work on the development of an industrial strategy to promote the distribution of Canadian commercial films as part of the Canadian cultural industries.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Mr Farnan has moved ballot item number 10. The honourable member for Cambridge has 10 minutes to initiate debate.

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): More than 10 years ago, the Canadian Film Development Corp said in its annual report:

"Motion pictures are the most pervasive and powerful means of expression in our time. For any independent nation which wishes to nurture its people or convey to others a distinctive identity, the development of an indigenous, authentic motion picture industry is indispensable."

If this is so, and I believe it is, then this resolution is about the future of Canada as a nation separate from the United States; it is about our separate cultural identity, about the differences in the way we think, about the differences in the sort of nation we want.

Now, with NAFTA already a threat to our jobs, our health care, our sovereignty, all the things this government holds sacred, unless we take some action, we could lose control of our ability to present ourselves as a nation.

The Canadian film industry, much of it based in Ontario, has never competed in size or influence with the United States. This resolution looks at the effects of the free trade agreement and the possible effects of NAFTA on our indigenous film industry and asks the province of Ontario to exercise the right specifically provided in the agreements to nurture a distinct Canadian culture.

Ontario must signal to its own cultural entrepreneurs that it supports them in trying to retain a toehold in our own civilization—or that massive part of our civilization that is affected by film, whether in movie theatres, on TV or on video. I say "toehold" because that is all we have: a toehold.

How has this come about? Accepted business practice has encouraged financiers south of the border to integrate the movie business both horizontally and vertically

so that two major chains now virtually monopolize distribution of films in this country, not only pushing out our own movies but sending the profits of this distribution south of the border to finance further Hollywood films when our own industry survives on a shoestring.

This has been apparent for years to successive governments, both federally and provincially, and report after report has urged action, but nothing has been done about this basic problem of distribution rights. The result is that our own film industry starves while Hollywood eats up the market, a cuckoo in our nest.

It is my belief that we can maintain and build a Canadian film business not so much by subsidizing our own filmmakers but by giving our Canadian distributors open access to independently produced commercial films, putting certain limits on the Canadian distribution rights of foreign distributors and eliminating barriers between the provinces. The money and the attention this access will earn for our distributors and for our own Canadian films will be put back into our own home-grown film industry.

1110

The topics in this resolution are not new. Only 10 years ago a federal task force on film distribution, exhibition and marketing recommended restricting American distributors to bringing into Canada only movies to which they have worldwide rights. A writer at the time referred to a "stranglehold" that Canadian Odeon Theatres and the US-owned Famous Players had over first-run showing of Hollywood pictures.

In 1984 the federal government released a national film and video policy that included authorization for negotiations between government representatives and foreign-owned film distributors. This same policy described Canada's film and video industry as a key growth sector in the context of the information revolution, and it noted that the best available figures at that time showed that 80% of theatrical distribution revenues went to foreign-owned distributors and that less than 1% of those revenues came from distribution of Canadian films. At the box office, Canadian features accounted for only 2% of receipts in Canada and the nation's films were rarely shown outside this country.

Canada is not alone in having its theatre screens dominated by US production. Hollywood is king in most parts of the world, but many countries have instituted restrictions to maintain a healthy domestic market for its film industry.

The national film and video policy promised a negotiated improvement in distribution of Canadian productions to Canadian audiences and to audiences worldwide, but the Liberal government of the time did nothing.

The year 1985 saw yet another federal government,

and yet another task force made a report. This time the task force on the film industry had, as recommendation 1, domestic ownership and control of companies distributing films and videos. It noted, "Our problem is less one of obtaining entry to foreign markets than it is in gaining access to our own markets." It continued, "We require a firm domestic policy, not one subject to bilateral trade negotiations, particularly with the country that totally dominates our domestic market."

I don't want members to think that I am indulging in gratuitous US-bashing. Let me quote from the film industry task force again: "The Canadian film industry plays a unique role in our cultural expression. It defines our identity, creates jobs and has considerable economic ramifications." Looking after the Canadian film industry is not just a cultural necessity; it's good business.

More quotes from the task force:

"Distribution"—and that's what this resolution is about—"occupies a strategic position in the industry. It supplies markets and finances production. In 1981, 97% of profits from Canadian theatrical distribution went to foreign, mainly American, companies. In practice, the American industry considers Canada to be part of its domestic market. This situation is unique in the world. It poses a threat to Canadian sovereignty and hampers the growth of our industry."

Among the results of American control of distribution, the task force declared, was minimal screen time for Canadian productions, Canadian distributors holding only marginal positions in their own market, and Canadian film-goers, with their seat-buying dollars, financing foreign—by which is meant Hollywood—productions.

The task force pointed out that it just wanted Canadian distributors to have an opportunity to bid on rights to distribute films. It was not suggesting expropriation of property or keeping foreign films out of the country. What is needed is the right to compete fairly for distribution rights and to pay royalties for them, in accordance with standard business practice. That's what the task force said and that's what this resolution is about.

In 1988, the Film Products Incorporation Act, by all accounts, fell foul to the free trade talks, was watered down and then evaporated when a federal election was called.

Ontario has not been totally silent in the movie business. In 1987 it commissioned A Review of the Ontario Film and Video Distribution Industry, which found, "The vast majority of the business is controlled by subsidiaries of US studios." It noted Cineplex Odeon as "the largest theatre chain, not only in North America but possibly the world." It noted that all American production companies are vertically integrated to the distribution level by their branch offices in Canada.

In July 1990, the Ontario Ministry of Culture and

Communications and the Ontario Film Development Corp released The Socioeconomic Impact Assessment of the Ontario Film and Video Industry. This noted the size of the industry: \$2.7 billion in total domestic output, one of the top 20 industries in this province with a \$5.4-billion trickle-down impact, creating 35,700 jobs.

In case anybody has ideas that giving our distributors the right we're suggesting in this resolution is an invitation to them to sit back, let me point out that the film industry in Ontario is lively, with 250 production companies. However, they make nearly 30% of their money from TV commercials. While I readily concede that commercials may well reflect our culture and our ethics, there are other aspects of our culture to be mirrored to the world: our kinder, gentler society, for instance.

The impact assessment noted difficulties in the film industry, lack of production financing and American domination of cinemas among them, both of which are addressed in this resolution.

No claim is made that your approval of this item will suddenly solve the problems of American domination of the industry or make our own distributors gloriously rich. It will simply be a start on putting the Canadian film industry, especially Ontario's part of it, into expansion mode.

The distribution part of the film business is the key to a healthy film industry. Successive governments of all parties have failed to turn this key. It is up to us, and I ask you to support this resolution.

Trade is fundamental to the economic wellbeing of a province. This is merely one aspect of the trade of this province but is essentially one of the 20 most important industries.

I look to this government and I look to this House for support in urging a response that will make this industry stronger.

The Acting Speaker: All recognized parties will now have 15 minutes to participate in the debate.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): It gives me great pleasure to rise and speak to this bill. I've read through it several times and, with due respect, I don't quite understand what he's trying to do. I somehow suspect by paragraph 3, where he says, "Use its regulatory powers under the Theatres Act," that this is an effort for government to once again jump into the marketplace and control and direct how things will be accomplished.

I have to say at the outset I agree with my friend that it troubles me and I think it troubles most Canadians that our children are being influenced by products that are beamed here through the electronic wizardry of discs and cables and all the rest of it and are in fact having an impact in terms of our morals, of our attitude towards life, our attitude towards family life and so on.

But unless you're prepared to build a wall that will perhaps reach to the sky to stop this wizardry, you're going to be involved in seeing it and it's going to have a direct impact on our young people and their attitudes towards all of the things I've suggested and many more. In fact I would suggest that Marshall McLuhan, who was probably well before his time, recognized the insidious nature of communications, particularly visual communications.

I think at that time, had we taken McLuhan up and accepted what he had said, we would have recognized the fact that if we wanted to protect not just our identity—I agree our identity is important—but if we wanted to protect our young people from images that were being produced in Hollywood, which at that time bore no reasonable representation of what was going on in the real life, if they had stopped it then, we wouldn't now be in a position where our society is in some respects emulating or adoring or falling at the feet of these images and these modes and ways of life.

Although I concern myself about the Canadian identity, I think that my friend, in introducing a bill such as this, perhaps could have given it a much broader and much more utilitarian and much more helpful face had he directed it in terms of what the responsibility of government is, if any, in entering a market field to make certain that the images that are projected and that we are bombarded with are ones that are healthy, that create a healthy lifestyle, a healthy attitude towards civilized society.

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When we look at the number of images that are projected at us that contain violence towards women, towards a whole host of people, what is the government doing about that? My colleague the member for Eglinton debated a bill in here a short time ago, which I had the pleasure of participating in, talking about slasher movies. What have we done about that? What has the present government done about that?

They have the powers under the Theatres Act to deal with that. What have they done? I don't want to rehash that debate, but I think it's of some importance: They have the power to stop video stores from making available to kids, eight- and nine-year-olds, these movies where they can take them home and put them in the video machine, watch them and have their entire attitude changed and made very bad, deteriorate. I think that's where this should be directed.

I have concerns, as I've said, in terms of government trying to jump into the marketplace and direct what Canadians will do, or for that matter even finance them. There's a good deal to be said about entrepreneurial arrangements in this regard. Number one, it places an emphasis on the people who are investing in this type of material in ensuring that the product is one that's going to be marketable. Now that's a double-edged sword.

You can get entrepreneurs who want to sell smut because they figure it will make them a bigger profit or, on the other side of the coin, you can get people who are truly interested in the film industry in terms of achieving the end that my friend is reflecting in his motion: to achieve an identity of Canadians.

I came originally from the United States. I've been here since I was 17. I have to say that when I look at the United States and what has happened to the United States, particularly places like New York and Chicago, they have become totally out of control. The crime on the streets is unbelievable.

To a large degree, I think that's reflective of what the Hollywood idea puts on the screen, that it's fine to jump out of a helicopter with a bazooka and blow the brains out of all these other human beings. That's the type of attitude that prevails. It's no wonder then that joined with the Americans' right to bear arms and the fact that these kids are watching these movies, you are now seeing that type of violence creep into Canada.

In fact it's not the Canadian identity. I think if the government got involved in controlling how this is done and financing it, you would find that that would be just sort of shoved off on to the shelf. There would be really no interest in policing it and making certain that the content of that programming that we were going to try to establish to create the identity of Canadians was good, wholesome stuff. It would be an attempt to compete with the glossy, glitzy—more often than not overglitzy—attitudes that are prompted by Hollywood.

I don't want to condemn all of the films that come out of Hollywood. There are some very excellent ones that come out. But I suggest that if government has control of it, you can bet your bottom dollar that it will be put on the shelf, just as they're doing with the slasher films, not exercising the powers they already have to take that smut off the shelves. So what can we expect government to do if it gets control of this industry itself?

The National Film Board, however, is an excellent example of how government perhaps can get involved in a singular way in terms of creating feature films, short subject films. We've seen many of them that I think as Canadians we should be very proud of that have wound up at the Cannes Film Festival or have wound up even getting nominated for Oscars in Hollywood in that big bash that takes place once a year.

I suggest to you that Canadians can compete. We have to stop telling Canadians that you need Big Brother or government to help you. I think the attitude of Canadians is, "We want an opportunity to be able to conduct our business free of government on our backs and having to file this and that with them every time we make a move." That's the type of environment in which you will see Canadian identity protected by Canadians.

I have to look at some of the—and I try not to be partisan in these debates, but I have to at least jump into—having just come from one of the budget breakfasts this morning where we tried to inform the public as to how the budget would impact on them, I look at the question of day care. There are people out there who want a choice, they want a choice between private and public day care. I didn't see one word in the budget talking about private day care even existing. It was simply public day care. Everything's public. The government is going to do everything for you. All you've got to do is be prepared to continue to pay till you haven't got any money in your pocket and government will look after you from the cradle to the grave.

I suggest to you that's a bad mentality. That is a bad Canadian identity to reveal to the world and to Ontarians and Canadians alike. I think it's time we recognized that Canadians are in fact very bright people who have great ability to create—very creative, industrious, inventive. I mean, you look at some of the inventors who have come from this country. They certainly weren't helped out by the government of the day and told what they could do or couldn't do. They were free thinkers. They had the opportunity to think freely, because governments of that day felt the entrepreneurial skills and the atmosphere should be created so that they could flourish.

The present government today, unfortunately, has this dogmatic ideologue attitude that you can't do anything. You can't cut down a tree because you need help in cutting down that tree. I suggest to you that's a very unhealthy attitude.

As much as my friend wants to protect the identity of the citizens of this province, I don't think they need government's protection, I say with all due respect to the member who has produced this motion. I think what they need is a free and open atmosphere to allow them to do this without hindrance from government. If you open up and give them that freedom of opportunity and you don't try to—every time they want to do something and turn around, they've got to fill out a form or they've got to comply with a regulation or they have to do this or that. If you do that, I suggest that you will find Canadians who will in fact participate fully in society, that they have the ability and the hope.

I think what's happening today is the hopes of Canadians are being dashed by the politicians who invoke taxes constantly, have drained them to the last cent in their pockets. I'm surprised they don't reach into our pockets personally and take that last couple of dollars, because they want it all, because they can do it better. My friend has been around this House long enough and I'm sure he's aware that governments don't do it better. Leave it to the individual.

Government's role should be, as I started out by saying, to maintain and protect the fabric of our society,

to ensure that the quality of product that is being produced here or being allowed into this country is product that is going to make our children better, not worse. I suggest that the government perhaps should look at that first, before it starts suggesting that we should take over another operation by directing entrepreneurs how they will produce films and so on. Because, as I say, they've done a very poor job in terms of the slasher movies; they've done a very poor job in terms of ensuring that the quality and fabric of our society is maintained.

If that's the record of government, if that's government's record, then I suggest to you, I don't think I would want any part of government getting involved in that. I'd prefer to see the marketplace be the judge of how to produce films and let the purchaser and let the society determine that this is good or bad for them, and they'll invest in it or they won't invest in it.

I would think the large number of Canadians, although there are exceptions, will invest in a quality product. They'll invest in something they see that's going to demonstrate Canadians as an upbeat type of people with a large degree of family values, with a large degree of caring about individuals, less and less violence in them, and if that happens, I think you'll find the investment will flourish.

You do get the small group that will invest in smut, and they'll make a buck on anything, but I suggest that the largest number of Canadians are those people who have values, a different set of values than the United States, and this is one of the things about Canadians that's so beautiful. Perhaps we don't display our degree of individualism and we don't display this caring that we, as Canadians, have that perhaps distinguishes us from Americans. That's why the only thing Americans know about us is that we have snow, and the standing joke used to be, and I think it still happens, you'll see them driving up here with their skis on their car in the middle of the summer, thinking, "Well, there must be snow in Canada because they're in the great white north."

1130

Perhaps we should be selling what we have, and what we have is very distinctive. It's something that no one has ever been able to put a handle on. What are Canadians? What is Canadianism?

So you're quite right in this respect, that our identity must be maintained. But I would say on the other side of the coin that our identity should be something that we're proud of and that we tell other people about, and we relate it to them.

I just recently came back from travelling in England and France, and I find over there that they think we're all Americans. So my wife and I wore our Canada pins on our lapels because we figured that that way we would be received in a much better way.

I think Americans have a lot to learn from us as Canadians. They have a lot to learn about our caring attitude, the fact that we do care about the people who are not able to help themselves legitimately, that we're not prepared to run somebody over simply to make a buck, that we do, in fact, have a health care system which hopefully will continue to be the best in the world. I think Americans have a lot to learn from us. Americans come up here and are blown away by Toronto, the city of Toronto, and many of our small communities, because they still are relatively crime-free. But I suggest that if government doesn't get off the backs of people and start doing what governments should do, to ensure safety and standards that will in fact maintain the fabric of Canadians, then we're going to go the same way as New York, Detroit and Chicago.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I'm very pleased to rise this morning to speak to the member for Cambridge's resolution. The resolution is as follows:

"That, in the opinion of this House,

"(1) since our identity as citizens of this province is dependent on our national identity as Canadians; and

"(2) since Ontarians need and want Canadian commercial films which reflect and help shape the unique lives and dreams of Canadians; and

"(3) since the production of such films is dependent upon a viable national film industry and the development of a distinct Canadian market for commercial films; and

"(4) since the distribution sector is crucial to the health of the film industry, and distributors not only feed the markets but also finance film production by reinvesting their profits in new commercial films; and

"(5) since at this time, major US distributors control the Canadian feature film market and, as a result, only 4% of screen time in Canadian movie theatres is devoted to Canadian-made movies; and

"(6) since the US film industry has always seen Canada as part of the US domestic market; and

"(7) since the 1988 Canada-US free trade agreement and the proposed North American free trade agreement specifically provide that Canadian and provincial governments have the right to take steps to nurture a distinct national culture and protect Canadian sovereignty in this area; and

"(8) since Canadian distributors, most of whom are based in Ontario, are ready and able to buy separate Canadian distribution rights to successful foreign and independently produced American commercial films,

"the government of Ontario should work with the other provincial governments to urge the federal government to:

"(1) establish a nationwide licensing system that would,

"(a) give Canadian distributors open access to independently produced commercial films; and

"(b) limit the Canadian distribution rights of foreign distributors to films on which they were intended to hold the original copyright or on which they hold the world rights; and

"(2) promote as an issue to be addressed in future interprovincial trade talks, the elimination of barriers between provinces that currently prevent Canadian film distributors from having equal access to all Canadian markets."

The resolution continues. I won't continue reading it.

I would like to express my good wishes to the member for Cambridge. He's well liked and well respected by all members of this House, and he's put forward, in my opinion, a very sincere resolution that he feels should be addressed by this government.

The primary focus of this resolution is with respect to what the federal government can do, and that concerns me, because once again we see a member of the governing party talking about what the federal House should be doing, what the federal government should be doing to solve problems in this country, when in fact we have significant problems at the provincial level in this province, problems that we in this House deal with directly, that we really have an opportunity to influence. When we talk about the federal government, we can do it all we want, but really, we're responsible here for provincial problems that fall within provincial jurisdiction, and that concerns me.

With respect to this resolution, I consulted a number of knowledgeable people in my riding to seek their advice. A gentleman named Richard Dooley, who is a reporter for the Guelph Daily Mercury—the honourable member may know him—has written a number of newspaper articles about this very issue, and I sought his advice. He gave me the example of a film called *Company of Strangers*, which was a National Film Board production that won several awards abroad in international festivals and only after the international recognition came to the Canadian screens in a big way.

I also talked to a gentleman by the name of John Chalmers, who is I believe the owner-manager of something called the Gorge Cinema in Elora. I would like to tell all members about the excellence of that repertory cinema. We're very, very fortunate to have it in our riding of Wellington. That cinema, the Gorge Cinema, has been helped in the past with respect to endeavouring to screen Canadian-made movies through the assistance of the Ontario Film Development Corp, a program called the repertory cinema pilot project which assisted in the marketing of a number of Canadian films. They make an effort at the Gorge Cinema to screen about 12 Canadian movies every year. I want to call them movies, because I think people traditionally

don't talk about films; they talk about movies. What we're talking about here is actually movies that people want to see, and I think we have to keep it in that context.

The member has indicated that there are significant problems with respect to the ability of Canadian screen owners to screen American movies. There's a problem with respect to distribution. Because of the fact that the distribution end of the movie business is pretty well owned and operated by the American distributors, that creates problems. There is some degree of academic research which actually refutes this statement. It suggests that this is actually a myth, that the distribution of films in Canada is handled as a matter of course and that the fact that US-owned distributors primarily distribute US films, really they don't have a problem with producing Canadian films if people want to watch them.

Steven Globerman, who is with the faculty of business administration at Simon Fraser University, has written on this subject. I refer to an article that was published in the Canadian Journal of Communications in 1991, and I'd just like to read a paragraph out of his conclusion of a lengthy journal article. Mr Globerman writes:

"US film producers have a long-standing competitive advantage in the film industry that is not likely to be eroded by marginal changes in the structure of Canada's domestic industry. Improving the competitiveness of Canada's feature film industry quite simply requires making more films that a greater number of people want to see. Commercially produced Canadian films will be distributed by the majors, since it is in the majors' self-interest to do so. Commercially unpromising Canadian films will require government subsidy regardless of who owns the distribution sector. In short, simply reducing foreign ownership in Canada's film distribution sector will not promote the production of more Canadian films."

What simply he is saying is, if a Canadian film is good, people will want to see it. If a Canadian film is good, if it receives positive critical reviews, it will be seen. If it's good, it will be marketed, and if it's good, people will want to see it and they'll pay to see it.

There are a number of good examples—I'm very pleased to speak in support of our excellent film industry that we have—in recent years. Denys Arcand, who is quite a well-renowned film director from Montreal—two movies that were very well received critically and received substantial box office success as well, *Decline of the American Empire*, *Jesus of Montreal*; a more recent movie, *Black Robe*, which was directed by an Australian director, Bruce Beresford, but was with respect to a Canadian story, a Canadian novel set in Canada, actually a \$14-million movie. It's a very, very expensive, significant movie to be made in Canada.

All three of those movies were good. They received good critical reviews and people went to see them.

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Now we see, with this government's policy in this budget as of yesterday, \$2 billion in new tax increases, money taken out of people's pockets, disposable income from every single family across the province being taken from their pockets. How can we see that anybody's going to be going to any movies, much less Canadian, much less whatever kind of movie you want to categorize? It's going to be very, very difficult. It costs the average family about \$50 for two people to go to a movie, if you take into the account the babysitter, the food, the parking and the actual \$8 admission fee for each movie that people go to.

With this government's tax increases, which will take most of the disposable income from every single family in Ontario starting July 1, when the theatres really do most of their business over the summertime, it's going to be very difficult for any of these screens to be able to continue to have people coming in. It's going to be very difficult for families who want to see movies; it doesn't matter what kind of movie you're talking about.

I recognize what the member for Cambridge is saying, but I submit to you that the government which he sits with has brought in policies that are going to devastate the film industry in Ontario and Canada and the screen owners.

Mrs Irene Mathysen (Middlesex): I'm very pleased to join in this debate and I want to thank the member for Cambridge for this topical resolution. Unlike others today, I'm going to stay on topic and talk about the film industry.

As you know, the federal government moves closer each day to signing the NAFTA agreement, which, if we borrow from the film industry horror movie titles, could be called the Free Trade Agreement Part II or the Foolish, Irresponsible Trade Policy that Ate Canada.

We all know about the more overt results of the 1989 free trade agreement: the deindustrialization of Ontario, the direct loss of 45,000 jobs, the increase to our social assistance rolls and the burden place on Ontarians as we try to meet our obligations to ourselves, our children and each other, a burden that has been very difficult for many of us in Ontario to carry.

One area, however, in regard to the damage on our society by the free trade agreement often overlooked is the damage to our cultural industries. Some in this House or watching on television mightn't appreciate the full implication of this threat to cultural industries. That is unfortunate.

As a former teacher of senior English, I taught Canadian literature and film. Initially, when students discovered my OAC course would concentrate on Canadian works, there was a sigh of concern that the

course would be less than enthralling. I can assure you that my students soon discovered that nothing could be further from the truth. The great works of Canadian authors and the powerful movies of Canadian artists and directors speak to us as Canadians in a way no external voice could.

When we read the works of a Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, Robertson Davies or Timothy Findley, we recognize ourselves. We feel the strength and endurance of the land and we sense something of our identity—past, present and future. It's something that defies explanation. The same is true of Canadian films and Canadian television productions. Their continued availability is essential if we are to see reflections of ourselves, of who we are, in public broadcasts, movie houses and videos. That is why it is so essential to look carefully at the cultural implications of the free trade agreement and the North American free trade agreement.

Last April, members of the Directors Guild of Canada and the Ontario district council of the guild presented a brief to the Ontario cabinet committee on NAFTA, of which I was a member. A key part of the presentation focused on film distribution in Canada and the need to not only strengthen Canada's own film distribution industry but to require that Canada be treated as a separate market for film rather than as part of the domestic US market. It is essential that the distribution sector of the film industry be under the control of Canadians, because from distribution of films comes revenue and from revenue comes investment in more films, thereby generating more revenue.

Did you know that more than \$1.5 billion in annual revenue is realized from movie theatre and home video markets, and the vast majority of the revenues earned from such film distribution in Canada flows back to the US and is invested in making American movies? This drain poses a serious threat to Canadian culture and Canadian sovereignty and strangles the growth of our own film industry.

This is simply not acceptable, and what is most upsetting is that despite the clear need for protection of Canadian cultural industries and lipservice to that protection by the federal Tory government, that protection was abandoned because of pressure during free trade agreement talks by the powerful Motion Picture Association of America, and Canadian distribution rights were traded away. Interestingly enough, Mexico retained the right for 30% of screen time for films made by Mexican producers. It would seem that Canadian free-traders didn't just fail to protect our energy and natural resources under the free trade agreement and NAFTA but also managed to squander our cultural resources.

I would like to conclude my remarks, because I know that others in my caucus would like to speak, by

indicating support for my colleague's resolution to urge the federal government to establish a nationwide licensing system and give Canadian distributors open access to independently produced commercial films and to encourage the government of Ontario to work on the development of an industrial strategy to promote the distribution of Canadian commercial films as part of Canadian cultural industries, and, above all, to defeat regressive trade agreements like the FTA and NAFTA that are strangling us materially and suffocating us spiritually.

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): I am pleased to have this opportunity to comment briefly on this resolution brought forward today by the member for Cambridge.

In essence, what this resolution is all about is:

"Since our identity as citizens of this province is dependent on our national identity as Canadians; and

"Since Ontarians need and want Canadian commercial films which reflect and help shape the unique lives and dreams of Canadians; and

"Since the production of such films is dependent on a viable national film industry and the development of a distinct Canadian market for commercial films; and

"Since the distribution sector is crucial to the health of the film industry, and distributors not only feed the markets but also finance film production by reinvesting their profits in new commercial films...."

While I support this resolution in principle, I suspect that the real intent of the member for Cambridge is to give his colleagues an opportunity to take some cheap shots at the federal government and free trade, rather than concentrating on cleaning up their own backyard.

What's not to support in a resolution filled with motherhood statements? Who can argue with the fact that our identity as citizens of this province is dependent on our national identity as Canadians? I suspect most of my colleagues here in this Legislature agree with the American film director D.W. Griffith, who told the *Toronto Star* on December 15, 1925: "You in Canada should not be dependent either on the United States or Great Britain. You should have your own films and exchange them with those of other countries. You can make them just as well in Toronto as in New York."

Of course Ontarians need and want Canadian commercial films that reflect and help shape the unique lives and dreams of Canadians. We in Canada are more than capable of producing films of our own that are distinctly Canadian, rather than trying to copy the Hollywood film establishment industry. Don Shebib, Canadian director of the film *Goin' Down the Road*, told the *Toronto Globe and Mail* on October 31, 1970: "I know a whole lot of people here are pushing hard to make Hollywood establishment films. The trouble is, of course, that they won't be nearly as good as

Hollywood establishment films." So why bother? asked Don Shebib.

Who wouldn't want government to work on the development of an industrial strategy to promote the distribution of Canadian commercial films as part of Canadian cultural industries?

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In 1975, film critic John Hofsess noted that it would take more than government action to create a viable film industry when he said:

"To create a Canadian film industry, we first have to create Canada. Whatever happens to Canada's film culture will be symptomatic of Canada as a whole. The struggle goes on, and everyone, including the apathetic, is determining the outcome."

As I said earlier, this resolution is just a bunch of feeble, cheap shots at the federal trade agreement between Canada and the United States and the North American free trade agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico. Other than containing a series of motherhood statements, it really does not do much for the film industry.

The member for Cambridge should know that Ontario, more than any other province, depends on bilateral trade with the United States to generate much of its wealth. No other province has more to lose if access to that market is constrained or reduced. Yes, the member for Cambridge and his colleagues know full well that for Canada, participation in NAFTA is regarded as a protectionist move. In order to avoid being shut out of the large market, Canada must continue to go along with the expansion of the free trade network.

I would suspect the people of Ontario would want their government to concentrate on cleaning up its own backyard, rather than working so hard and wasting so much time on resolutions that are nothing more than a poorly disguised attack on another level of government and its policies. You would almost think that political economist and renowned humorist Stephen Leacock, who once resided in the Sunshine City of Orillia on the shores of Lake Couchiching, was looking 60 years ahead into the future when, in 1933, he said:

"Socialism is only a bright soap bubble, light as ignorance and floating with its own gas. It would only work in a community of impossible people, guided by impossible leaders and inspired by an inconceivable goodwill." That was what Stephen Leacock said back in 1933. "The angels, no doubt, are socialists."

I believe the people of Ontario would tend to think about yesterday's budget if they read what Stephen Leacock said in 1959: "Socialism won't work in heaven, where they don't need it, and in hell, where they already have it." Enough said.

Ms Jenny Carter (Peterborough): I take great

pleasure in supporting the resolution put forward by the member for Cambridge, and I do this for two main, but connected, reasons.

First is the crassly economic one. Filmmaking is a business and a job provider. The relevant skills, once developed, are a valuable asset, just as are other skills. Films can be exported, they can make money, and I hope and believe quality counts here, as in other fields. What Canadians do best are films that express our own culture. To nurture and encourage the filmmaking expertise we have here is part of maintaining and strengthening our competitive advantage in the global economy.

But films are more than just cash producers. They are an expression of who we are, a vehicle for strengthening and nourishing our culture. We are not Americans. In fact, Jack Kapica's column in yesterday's *Globe and Mail* suggested that we are more spiritually distinct than is readily apparent.

Personally, as someone who chose to live in Canada, I have to say that I prefer Canadian films. Canada has a distinct and wonderful culture which varies with our many regions and populations. We should be proud of it. We have a lot to offer both each other and the rest of the world. We allow that self-expression to be suffocated at our collective peril.

We have a commendable record in film production. In particular, the National Film Board of Canada has produced excellent documentaries that deserve far wider showing than they actually get and would go a long way, if seen, to nourishing our national psyche.

I recently took a Canadian studies course that used these documentaries. I was amazed by the impact they had. But how many people see them? The movie version of Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners* captured the distinct Canadian flavour of the original novel. We can make great films.

Quebec in particular has many wonderful films to its credit which deserve a wider currency in the other provinces. Some have already been mentioned, but going back a bit further in time I think of *Mon Oncle Antoine*, *Kamouraska* and many others. If more widely seen, they might go far to dissolving some of the prejudice and ignorance that divide Canada's two solitudes, and Quebec, I'm sure, could benefit from films made elsewhere in Canada.

It is incredible that we have committed internal barriers to stunt the growth for so long of our already struggling national culture. We have good literature, beautiful and varied landscapes, the richness of our different regional and ethnic traditions and the talents of our people to celebrate. Toronto alone has many worlds within worlds that need to get to know each other. I remember a film about a young Italian Canadian that could only have been made in Toronto.

Why should we devalue ourselves by allowing both cultural and economic takeovers from the south? Unlike most nationalities, Canadians suffer from being too modest, too self-deprecating and from not realizing how much we have to offer. Let's take out some of that wealth and capture it on film and show it to each other and to the world.

I strongly believe that this government should work with the federal government to remove internal and other barriers to make sure that Canadians can make and see films about ourselves. The alternative is either no film industry or to make fake US movies here and export them. We can do better than that.

Above all, we must not let NAFTA or any other agreement deprive us of our ability to develop our own culture.

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): In many respects, I really don't want to repeat a number of the comments that my very able colleagues have made. I appreciate the comments particularly from the member for Middlesex, who in fact made a number of the comments that I would like to have made about NAFTA, because I think that's something we're all keenly aware of and it's something that really and truly we have to address.

I don't want to steal the thunder from the member for Cambridge in addressing some of the points the member for Wellington had raised, but I feel somewhat compelled to respond at this time. I furiously started to write as he was making these comments.

The member opposite indicates that this is a federal issue, and I wouldn't be one to in any way deny that. Culture is primarily a federal issue, but at the same time I think all of us are aware that there are issues that do come up in this House where all members on all sides really want to take a position. I think culture, along with agriculture, is an area where we feel very strongly. They are important national issues but they also have a very important political concern, and we want to do something to protect those provincial industries.

If we take a look at what's happening in the supply management side of agriculture, in your riding, Mr Speaker, with the dairy industry and what have you, we would feel very loath in this House to say, "It's only a federal issue and we can't take a position." Very clearly, a lot of the rural members in this House would say, "No, we have to say something."

Culture in my part of the world also is very important, because I represent a riding that has a very vital cultural industry. It doesn't have a film industry per se, but it has an entertainment industry, a cultural industry. Provincially, I think it's very important for the people watching and members in this House to realize that one in six workers in this province is employed in the entertainment industry. If we do not promote that

industry, you will see job loss. We have seen cutbacks in that industry over time because of the kind of—

Ms Sharon Murdock (Sudbury): Attitude.

Ms Haeck: —attitude, thank you, but also the draconian measures that the US would like to bring to our film industry. They want to be the only ones to distribute films and they want to take over that vital industry. I personally can't agree with that and I know many people within my riding would not either. They would want to be able to see our technicians, our cultural workers actively employed in an industry that is important to us and to see that we're in a position of expanding.

Getting our products, cultural or otherwise, to market is the very foundation of both maintaining and possibly increasing our market share. When the US insists, as it has time and again, that it will dominate the distribution of our film products as well as its own, it effectively means the loss of our cultural industry.

I believe at the heart of my comments is the agreement with my colleague the member for Cambridge that our cultural industries are important and need support. I obviously am in support of the member's resolution and thank him for the opportunity in this House to discuss an issue which should receive national attention, and I thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity.

The Acting Speaker: I thank the honourable member and indeed all members for participating. The honourable member for Cambridge now has two minutes to sum up.

Mr Farnan: I want to thank my colleagues the members for Middlesex, Peterborough and St Catharines-Brock for a very substantive contribution to the debate. I might include that I was impressed with the contribution made by the member for Wellington. Having said that, I despair of the quality of debate that takes place in this House around substantive issues.

On one of the most important issues facing this society, our cultural identity, an industry that's one of the 20 most important industries, the only contribution from the Liberal Party was Mr Callahan, the member for Brampton South, who for 15 minutes went on with irrelevant ramblings. He was merely filling time; he was not addressing the issue. It was basically harmless stuff, but honestly, people in this industry must be frothing, absolutely disgusted and angry that the official opposition has nothing to say on an issue of great importance to them.

Then let me turn to the contribution of the member for Simcoe East, Mr McLean. He stood in his place, not having been here for the debate, having wandered in at the end of the debate, and said he presumed that this resolution must be a partisan-inspired resolution. If he had been here, he would have realized that was absolutely far removed from where I stood and the contribu-

tion I made. What I listened to from Mr McLean was a totally partisan rant on behalf of the member for Simcoe East, totally removed from the issue of substance that we are debating.

I am worried. I am concerned, and the people of Ontario have every right to be concerned, when issues of substance, when issues that affect the economic health of our society have so little interest to the opposition parties that we can have the kind of contribution we've had from the Liberals, which was absolutely nil, talking about day care and trees when the issue is Canadian identity and the film industry, and from the member for Simcoe East, which basically was one of the most partisan rants that I have heard on an issue of substance.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We will now deal with ballot item number 9, Mrs Witmer's resolution. Are any members in this House opposed to a vote on Mrs Witmer's resolution? If so, please stand.

All those in favour of Mrs Witmer's resolution please say "aye."

All those opposed please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1205 to 1210.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Would all members take their seats.

All those in favour of Mrs Witmer's motion, please rise and remain standing.

Ayes

Arnott, Callahan, Cousens, Daigeler, Harnick, Harris, Jackson, Johnson (Don Mills), Jordan, Kwinter, Mahoney, McLean, Murdoch (Grey), Poole, Sterling, Stockwell, Tilson, Turnbull, Wilson (Simcoe West), Witmer.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to Mrs Witmer's motion, please rise and remain standing until identified by the Clerk.

Nays

Abel, Akande, Bisson, Carter, Cooper, Dadamo, Drainville, Duignan, Farnan, Frankford, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Klopp, MacKinnon, Mammoliti, Marchese, Mathysen, Mills, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Perruzza, Rizzo, Sutherland, Wessenger, White, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Winninger.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes are 20; the nays are 32. I declare the motion lost.

CANADIAN FILM INDUSTRY

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): We will now deal with ballot item number 10, standing in the name of Mr Farnan. All those in favour—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order, please. Are there any members opposed to a vote on Mr Farnan's resolution? If so, please stand.

All those in favour of Mr Farnan's resolution, please rise and remain standing—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1214 to 1219.

The Acting Speaker: All those in favour of Mr Farnan's resolution please rise and remain standing until identified by the Clerk.

Ayes

Abel, Akande, Arnott, Bisson, Carter, Cooper, Dadamo, Daigeler, Drainville, Duignan, Farnan, Frankford, Haeck, Hansen, Harrington, Hayes, Klopp, MacKinnon, Mammoliti, Marchese, Mathysen, Mills, Morrow, Murdock (Sudbury), North, O'Connor, Owens, Poole, Rizzo, Tilson, Wessenger, White, Wilson (Frontenac-Addington), Winninger, Wiseman.

The Acting Speaker: All those opposed to Mr Farnan's resolution please rise and remain standing until identified by the Clerk.

Nays

Callahan.

The Acting Speaker: The ayes are 35; the nays are 1. I declare the motion carried.

It now being past 12 noon, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 today.

The House recessed at 1222.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1331.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TAX INCREASES

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): Yesterday's budget cast a dark gloom across this province. Today, many people are reading reports of the budget, and the extent of the tax grab is becoming more evident.

This is a budget which among others attacks our young people and our seniors. Ontario's young people are facing a job crisis. The unemployment rate for our 15- to 24-year-olds is 17.5%, and right now in this province more than 150,000 young people in Ontario are out of work.

With this backdrop in mind, the government imposes taxes, taxes which directly hit our young people, the ones who are trying to find work. The government has increased their cost of living. Our young people will now pay tax on their auto insurance premiums and they will be paying tax on parking fees, dollars which they can scarcely afford. How is it that this government can justify this direct blow to our young people?

What about our seniors? Mr Speaker, you will know that these are the people who built our communities. In many instances, they are on fixed incomes, and as of yesterday, apart from the tax on car insurance, the tax on parking, they too will be paying taxes on their property insurance premiums. This is nothing less than an insult. It is regressive, it is hurtful, it is callous.

The government should be ashamed of its attack on our youth, especially on the jobless, and our seniors. Mr Premier, how do you justify this assault?

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I would ask that we recess for 15 minutes until the government feels that it can find the time to come in and listen to the proceedings of the House.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Are you asking for unanimous consent?

Mr Elston: That's right, for a recess for 15 minutes, until the government feels that it can provide enough people. There is not one, single minister in this place. These people are responsible for the budget. These things are supposed to be taken care of in the normal routine business.

The Speaker: The member, first of all, will note that this is members' statements time, which is available to backbench members. I understand the member's concern, but perhaps we'll reach another point of the routine proceedings.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe a quorum is present in this place.

The Speaker: Would the table count, please.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker: Call in the members; a five-minute bell.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is present, Speaker.

Mr Leo Jordan (Lanark-Renfrew): My statement is in regard of the Madawaska Highlands regional trust proposal—

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Where the hell is the government?

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Would the member for Mississauga West please come to order. Stop the clock, please.

Interjections.

The Speaker: I would ask the House to come to order, for all members to respect the opportunity for private members to make statements.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): After the budget yesterday—

The Speaker: The member for Oakville South is asked to come to order so that his own colleague can have his minute and a half. The member for Lanark-Renfrew.

CONSERVATION

Mr Jordan: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My statement is in regard of the Madawaska Highlands regional trust proposal in eastern Ontario.

The Premier and Minister of Natural Resources are in Algonquin Park today celebrating the 100th anniversary of Ontario's parks. We are celebrating the 260 parks in Ontario that cover an area larger than the province of Nova Scotia. After his tour of the park, the Minister of Natural Resources will appear at a public meeting in Denbigh this evening where he will face a crowd of over 1,500 people at an information session about the highlands proposal.

While celebrating the 6.3 million hectares of parkland, the Ministry of Natural Resources wants to establish another 4,000-hectare conservation area in the highlands region. For what would amount to only 0.07% of Ontario's parklands, the MNR is prepared to stifle the forest industry in eastern Ontario.

The Minister of Natural Resources has launched the silviculture tour of northern Ontario to "reflect on the importance of forests to our community." It seems that the MNR has failed to reflect upon the amount of jobs and revenue that will be lost if this proposal is implemented.

Constituents of mine who have attended previous

information sessions by the MNR say that it appears as though the wheels are already in motion, that this conservation area will be established regardless of consultation.

I hope that the Minister of Natural Resources can prove this assumption wrong. I am asking the government to listen to the people who attend the meeting in Denbigh and to engage in true consultation. I am positive that you will find that the overwhelming majority of the people in the highlands region are opposed to this highlands proposal.

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP

Mr George Dadamo (Windsor-Sandwich): I rise before this Legislature today and give an account of the events which took place last Friday at Dougall Avenue Public School in Windsor-Sandwich. May I say that the school put forth all efforts to ensure an enjoyable and exciting event, an event attended by the entire student body, some parents and also my colleague the member for Windsor-Walkerville.

It is truly a joy to watch and be part of an exciting event as it unfolds and to see the look on the faces of new citizens as they are welcomed to Canada. This past Friday was one of those events, when Judge Velma Meconi presided at Dougall Avenue Public School and invited students, parents and teachers to take part in a citizenship reaffirmation ceremony, a time when we reaffirm our allegiance to Canada and, of course, the Queen.

Judge Meconi is the presiding citizenship judge in Windsor. On many occasions I've been in attendance at her chambers on University Avenue to listen and to observe as she welcomes new citizens to Ontario and Canada. Judge Meconi is a judge who believes court sessions should be brought to the people and has many times brought her podium, her oath and her staff to various different settings throughout the city of Windsor.

About 20 children were brought to the stage, given a miniature flag and a scroll. They read aloud, as I did, the oath reaffirming our commitment to this great country of ours. Here's what the scroll looks like.

I simply would like to thank the teachers and staff of Dougall Avenue Public School for the kindness and generosity afforded to us during the ceremony. Their songs were splendid and their artwork second to none. Thanks to Judge Velma Meconi for bringing us a bit closer to an event which usually takes place in a court type of setting. To the children at Dougall Avenue Public School I'd like to say, "Make it a better place."

TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): As you know, tourism is Ontario's fourth-largest export industry and the province's largest employer in the service sector. The industry, because of this budget, will again be hard hit

by reduced consumer spending and the lack of confidence due to increases in provincial corporate and income taxes and the expansion of the consumption taxes that were announced in yesterday's budget.

The cancellation of the Ontario—Incredible! program will be a loss of \$15 million. This will seriously affect many of the conventions that were coming into the province and that may now cancel. The decision on the business deductions for meals will also greatly affect our numbers. In Australia alone, they found that in a matter of months 10,500 jobs were lost.

There are 30,000 businesses in the Ontario tourism industry, most of them small and family-owned, which have generated \$16.9 billion in tourism expenditures, \$2.3 billion in provincial taxes and \$3.3 billion in foreign exchange earnings over the time. Many of these will disappear, go bankrupt and out of business because of this budget.

Premier, you, the Treasurer and the Minister of Tourism and Recreation have failed to recognize in this budget that the tourism and hospitality industry is an integral part of the social and economic fabric of every community in the province.

1340

ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Yesterday's budget and the government's whole approach to deficit reduction have revealed who the real victims are of eight years of fiscal mismanagement at the hands of the Liberals and the NDP: the individual taxpayers.

The PC Party is supportive of deficit-reduction measures and led opinion on this issue long before anyone else in this assembly clued into that being the right thing to do, but we do not support the approach being utilized by this panic-stricken government.

You are in crisis management mode, formulating destructive proposals, like the fee proposals, which will have detrimental effects on graduating medical students. As the OMA president said recently, the slash-and-burn approach brought on by this government's panic is the antithesis of careful, planned, rational management and change.

The PC Party strongly opposes the tax hikes in yesterday's budget, which will leave less money in the pockets of consumers and less money available to fuel economic recovery.

We're also opposed to the government's unrealistic and unreasonable approach to expenditure reduction. The government is still a long way from fiscal accountability.

We had hoped for a budget which would have addressed the waste in government, such as the problem of health card fraud, rather than a fiscal plan which attacks Ontario's already overburdened taxpayers.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr Drummond White (Durham Centre): I'm pleased to rise today to talk about a march that I protested in and joined with at Parliament Hill in Ottawa last Saturday.

Mr Speaker, 100,000 people from across Canada turned out, 100,000 people with one voice, and that voice—

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): Why don't you do that at Queen's Park in Toronto?

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): Give me a break; 100,000.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr White: —delivered a message to the Mulroney government: "Your government, Mr Mulroney, robbed us of our jobs by forcing the free trade agreement down our throats and now is prepared to completely give away our future and that of our families by implementing the North American free trade agreement."

That message was loud and clear and repeated by activists and trade union members from across this province, across Canada, that those who are the hardest hit by the recession want jobs, the jobs that free trade and NAFTA have exported to the United States and to Mexico. They want their federal government to represent their interests and not those of multinationals and of foreign countries.

I was proud to join those 100,000 people, proud to join our CAW local and to bus up with them and with their children to Ottawa on Saturday. These Canadians made the effort to go by car, by bus, by train to the seat of the federal government. They demanded that the federal government get off its seat and recognize the situation. The subject is our economy and our jobs.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): Consumers in many parts of Ontario awoke this morning to huge and unjustified increases in gasoline prices, which as always were hiked across the board by all oil companies, by the same amount and at the same time within communities across the province.

People who voted for the NDP government may not have believed that you could manage the economy and likely didn't agree with all the policies you had on your platform, but from your rhetoric and policy pronouncements they likely believed you would protect the interests of the little person, the consumer. Why have you abandoned the consumers of this province and tourism and other industries, which rely on reasonably priced gasoline? Why have you continued to permit the gouging of the consumer by unrepentant gasoline companies in Ontario?

I'm sure that in the union halls, the community centres and the municipal council chambers across Ontario, NDP members, when in opposition and on the

election campaign trail, denounced gas increases and the companies that put them into effect. In fact, in Sudbury in August 1990, Bob Rae said, "I really think consumers are being ripped off by the gas companies."

In view of these past pronouncements, why do you not start to protect the consumers from the gouging and price-fixing practices of the multinational corporate monopolies which impose unnecessarily high and unfair gasoline prices on Ontario residents? Could it be that those companies are simply taking a cue from the Ontario government in gouging the people of this province?

TRANSFER PAYMENTS TO MUNICIPALITIES

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): Once again the NDP government has hit the average person squarely in the wallet with a budget that clobbers everyone in Ontario, the province that is now "Yours to Recover." The \$2-billion tax grab is the single largest in provincial history, and the bulk of it will be borne by people who are just barely getting by as it is. This budget means everybody will have less money in their pockets to spend. That's going to kill jobs and reverse the already fragile economic recovery.

The same government that continues to grab for everybody's wallet also continues to download programs to Ontario's 839 municipal governments without providing the adequate funding needed.

To top it all off, the Minister of Municipal Affairs has taken back some of what he had already given the municipalities, more than \$110 million in unconditional grants. The unconditional grants to the county of Simcoe, the city of Orillia and the townships of Medonte, Oro, Orillia and Mara were cut by 12.9%, grants to the village of Coldwater were cut 12.68%, while the town of Penetanguishene saw a reduction of 12.3%. Other cuts include: the township of Rama, 11.78%; the township of Tiny, 11.7%; and the village of Elmvale, 9.98%.

The Bob Rae government is forcing all Ontarians in all 839 municipalities to pay for his mistakes. Wake up, Bob. In the real world, it doesn't matter who does the math; you simply can't get 10 kilograms out of an eight-kilogram bag.

BLIND CHILDREN

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): A good news statement, Mr Speaker. This year, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind is celebrating its 75th anniversary. I find it fitting to draw attention to the contribution made across Canada by members of the Canadian Armed Forces military police in their help to blind children.

Former Canadian Provost Corps members began their commitment to help blind children over 30 years ago. This special relationship was brought about because a corps member's child was attending the school for blind

children in Brantford, Ontario.

Since that time, thousands of military policemen and women have contributed to a special fund for blind children. They have raised thousands of dollars across Canada, and while serving in NATO and UN peacekeeping locations, they've kept up the good work.

This fund now provides assistance to blind children right across Canada. The seed was sown many years ago in Brantford, and I ask all members to join with me in congratulating all Canadian Forces policemen and women, past and present, in their ongoing commitment to help our blind children. As a final note, I offer my own congratulations to the fine job of work that the Canadian National Institute for the Blind is doing in this, its 75th year of working in Canada.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Members will know that this is the last day for our current group of pages. I would ask the members to join me in thanking the pages for having served with such distinction the members and this assembly. Please thank them.

MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Mr Mike Cooper (Kitchener-Wilmot): On a point of order: I'd like to bring to the Speaker's attention a comment that was made yesterday that I feel is very inappropriate. In checking through Hansard, I found that when the Treasurer brought to our attention that he'll be withdrawing the \$5 tire tax as of midnight tonight, all that Hansard listed were interjections. But I think it was heard quite clearly in the House and it was clearly heard by the members of the viewing audience that somebody mentioned, "This will take care of the rubber workers."

Well, as the members know, I'm a member of Local 677, United Rubber Workers, and they're the only unionized tire plant in the province of Ontario right now.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Cooper: When the members look at the fact that 900 jobs were lost at General Tire in Barrie, 600 jobs were lost at Uniroyal Goodrich in Kitchener, 1,700 jobs at Goodyear in Etobicoke and 800 jobs at Firestone in Hamilton, they'll find this is very inappropriate and offensive and insensitive to the—

The Speaker: Would the member for Kitchener-Wilmot please take his seat. He does not have a point of order.

It is time for oral questions.

1350

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Mr Speaker, I want to bring to your attention again—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Elston: On a point of order: The reason we have question period is clearly stated, in relation to the standing orders, that it is the time when the opposition parties and backbench members of the government party have an opportunity to examine the operation of the ministries of the crown. The executive officers of this government are, as a result, supposed to be in their place.

Mr Speaker, while you cannot, and I understand that you cannot, require them all to attend, I would like to point out to you, sir, that today, including the Premier of the province, who yesterday was standing in his place applauding the Treasurer, there are 11 people of the executive council absent.

I understand that some of those people will have valid and good reasons for not being here, and I would even understand that probably there will be some rationalization of the reasons for their absences. But the one day after the budget when we have an opportunity to examine the departmental effects of the budget on those ministers, we are unable to access those ministers, because the people have left their places and will not now be back until May 31. That means that the operation of this place is out of order in the sense that we are not able to undertake the examination of the executive offices of the government of the province.

Mr Speaker, I would like to note for you the following pieces of information for your edification: During the fall session, the Premier of the province, out of 29 days, was absent some 16 days from this House, the Treasurer seven days, but a total of the ministers' absences during that 29 days was 142 minister days.

This spring session we have had 22 days so far, 10 in April, 12 in May. The Premier has been gone nine days; the Treasurer has been absent seven days, and the ministers, so far, 34 ministry absences in April, 71 ministers absent in May, for a total of 105 ministerial day absences from this place, when, during that time, we are supposed to examine the departmental workings of the government of this province.

We cannot force them to answer questions. We cannot now even access them as members of the opposition, as the standing orders give us the right and opportunity so to do.

Before, I stood in my place and asked about replies to our petitions which were laid on the table and for which I noted that there are a number of outstanding "no replies." They are not, as a result of that, replying to the petitions either. That means that there are no ministerial replies to the interventions directed through the members to the table in the Legislature from the government. That means we can't access the ministerial and departmental workings of this government.

If these people are always to be absent, and if we are not able to come back here within a reasonable period

of time in the spring, how is it that the standing orders are going to be enforced so that we can have access to inspect the departmental workings of the executive council of this chamber?

Mr Speaker, I ask you, as a result, for unanimous consent to allow this House to come back again on Monday next, instead of adjourning until May 31.

The Speaker: To the member for Bruce: He raises three points, and I wish to address them in turn.

The first point, as he correctly stated, is that there is nothing in the standing orders to compel the attendance of any member of the assembly. The Legislative Assembly committee may wish to consider amending the standing orders. I would certainly agree with him that, in principle, it is most desirable to have every member of the cabinet in attendance for each question period. I agree with that. There is nothing I can do to make that happen. However, the Legislative Assembly committee may wish to consider the matter and amend the standing orders.

The second point he raises is with respect to petitions which have been tabled and/or questions that have been placed on the order paper. He will know again that the standing orders say that there should be a reply. There are no sanctions should those replies not be forthcoming within the allotted time, but I can only sympathize with the point which he raises and urge the ministers to respond as quickly as is possible.

On his third point, I will put the question: Is there unanimous consent for this House to sit Monday next? Agreed? No. I heard at least one negative voice.

It is time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): My questions today will necessarily be to the Minister of Finance, whom the Premier has, perhaps understandably, left alone to defend the indefensible today.

This morning my caucus colleagues and I were out in 10 communities across this province. We wanted to get out to talk to municipal leaders, to business leaders, to union representatives, to education and health care workers, to just ordinary taxpayers in the province of Ontario, to find out what they thought about your budget. I can tell you that as our members have come back from those discussions, what they're telling us is that people are shocked, they're dismayed, they're angry, but, perhaps most of all, they're worried about the fact that your \$2-billion tax grab is going to put a lot more Ontarians out of work.

Minister, we raised our concerns earlier this week about the possibility that you might raise taxes by about \$400 million and that this would put 10,000 Ontarians out of work. So if we use the benchmark that we were using then of one job loss for every \$40,000 of taxes,

your budget's \$2-billion tax grab will mean that 50,000 more people in this province will be out of work.

Minister, I simply ask you today, how many people in this province do you believe are about to be out of work because of your budget, how many jobs will be lost and how can you possibly justify this kind of job loss in this province today?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): We believe that the Ontario economy, in the next year, will create somewhere in the neighbourhood of a little more than 100,000 jobs, that there's going to be positive economic growth and positive job growth in the province this next year.

I hope, as well, that when the leader of the official opposition and her colleagues were out across the province this morning, they told the people they talked to that they recognized that we have a problem in this province—

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Solve that problem by an election. Take your budget to the people.

Interjection: Two and a half years, Greg.

Mr Sorbara: We can't survive that long as a province.

Hon David S. Cooke (Minister of Education and Training): Just because you had one in three years, why should we?

Hon Mr Laughren: The Liberals are calling for an election after two and half years. When we see a problem in this province, we don't run away and hide from it like you did back in 1990. We deal with the problems in this province.

I hope the leader of the official opposition has told the people in the province, when she and her colleagues went out across the province this morning, that despite having a deficit that's unsustainable, that she and her colleagues are rejecting expenditure reductions all across the province, that she and her colleagues are rejecting any tax increases, and that she and her colleagues are rejecting trying to get savings from the public sector through the social contract.

The Liberal opposition in this province has no solutions. They simply want to complain about everything this government does to deal with the problems.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): As soon as we want you to speak for the Liberal Party, Floyd, we'll ask you.

Hon Mr Laughren: You'll never ask.

Mr Elston: That's right, because you can't speak for the Liberal Party.

Mrs McLeod: The economy in this province might have started to grow. We all hoped that it was going to start to grow. It is not likely going to do that now. The Treasurer is surely aware that even before this budget was presented, the Conference Board of Canada said that Ontario's recovery is not going to be what we had

hoped it would be. With the \$2-billion tax grab that you brought in your budget yesterday, you have killed that fragile economic recovery, Treasurer, and we all regret that and we are all worried about the job loss that's going to bring.

Treasurer, you did have alternatives to bringing in those kinds of taxes. You could have reviewed that Jobs Ontario Training program that we keep coming back to, that we don't believe is working effectively. Instead, you're putting more money into it this year. You could have reviewed the housing program. Instead of that, you are continuing with that program in spite of the auditor's concerns about its effectiveness, and that's going to cost millions of dollars more in future years.

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Treasurer, I just ask you why. Why did you choose to raise taxes instead? Why did you choose to put more people out of work?

Hon Mr Laughren: That's a ridiculous assumption. What this government did was, we said, "There's a major problem here in the neighbourhood of \$7 billion or \$8 billion," and a solution of \$300,000 million which the leader of the official opposition thinks would solve billions of dollars in problems simply doesn't hold any water.

What we said was, "We are going to tackle the problem in three ways: We're going to get our expenditures down," and we did that to the tune of \$4 billion; "We're going to look at compensation in the public sector," and we're doing that to the tune of \$2 billion; and "In order to make it fair and balanced, we are going to raise taxes in the province."

The very reason we're doing this is so that we can put money into job creation, into education and into training. Therein lies the competitiveness of this province, not in simply laying off more and more people, which presumably the opposition would rather we did.

Mrs McLeod: I'm sure that David Chmay won't feel a whole lot of renewed hope as a result of the answer you've just given to that question. He's one of those laid-off workers, Treasurer. He is an unemployed construction worker in St Catharines and he was looking forward to getting back to work next week, because he had a job promised. When the employer saw your budget and one of those taxes, one those of 20 taxes, a tax on sand and gravel, the company called him this morning and told him his job was off.

Treasurer, you had a chance, with this budget, to send that message to David Chmay and to others, a message of hope about the economy, a message of hope about job creation. Instead of that, with a \$2-billion tax grab, you decided to kick people while they were down.

I ask how you can possibly feel so confident that you've done the right thing, because you have clearly lost touch with people like David Chmay. Treasurer,

what were you thinking of when you decided to tax the economic recovery to death? Will you tell us what you would not tell us before your budget was tabled? What studies have you got in place that will tell us we are going to see jobs created instead of jobs lost? What studies have you got that will tell us how many more jobs will be lost, how many more people will be laid off and unemployed because of your budget yesterday?

Hon Mr Laughren: I don't want to be provocative, but I really think the leader of the official opposition is living in some kind of time warp. Does she not understand that we have a serious problem in this province, and the problem is a deficit that is climbing and climbing? We are spending more and more money servicing that debt.

I know the official opposition says: "Don't worry about the debt. Don't put in place your expenditure reductions. Forget about the social contract; it won't work." The day has gone when the people of this province will tolerate political leaders who simply duck when there's a problem and refuse to deal with the problem. We are dealing with it for the first time in the history of this province.

The Speaker: New question.

Mrs McLeod: I can assure the Treasurer, the Minister of Finance, that we all look forward to the day when we can stand in his place and defend the budget that we have presented, and the hope and the vision and the optimism that we will bring to the province of Ontario.

But today, Treasurer, I understand one thing very clearly, and that's that yesterday your government brought in the largest tax grab in the history of this province, the largest tax grab since the Tory budget of 1981. I understand, Treasurer, that the \$2 billion in extra taxes is going to come right out of the pockets of average taxpayers because of the budget you presented yesterday.

Let's get down to specifics. Let's take a two-income couple. She's an office administrator, he's a sales manager at a department store and they have two children. Your budget takes an extra \$225 right out of their pockets in higher income taxes. I'm not talking about the wealthy in Ontario. We're talking about middle-class Ontarians, people who work hard for a living, people who woke up today to discover that you and Bob Rae had once again forced them to dig a little bit deeper in their pockets to pay for your government's mistakes.

I ask again, how you can justify such an unwarranted tax grab on Ontario's middle class, who are the very people we need to lead us to that economic recovery we all want.

Hon Mr Laughren: I think the leader of the official opposition should just slow down a bit and put things in

perspective. When I looked at the numbers on the tax side after the budget of yesterday and I looked at the size of the Ontario economy and compared the taxes of the province now compared to the gross domestic product, the wealth of the province, guess what I discovered. I discovered that when we came to office in 1990, the percentage of taxes of the GDP was about 12.3%. After the budget yesterday, it's about 11.2%. So I don't need any lecture from the tax-and-spend Liberals of this province on our tax package when yours was higher as a proportion of the wealth of this province.

Mrs McLeod: That's fine, Mr Speaker. I will slow down. I will put things in perspective for the Treasurer. I will put them in the perspective of my real-people, middle-class, two-income family with two children and tell you that your budget didn't stop at taking out of their pockets with your income taxes.

This couple is now going to pay an extra \$40 in tax for insurance on their home. They're going to pay \$50 extra in taxes on their auto insurance. If they happen to have any more children, it's going to cost them more just to register the births, and, all told, the retail sales taxes alone are going to mean an extra \$110 at a minimum out of the pockets of these very real people, this average family in the province of Ontario. So we're up to \$335 in extra dollars taken from this couple because of your budget; and you say these tax measures are fair.

Minister, the tax measures are hard, as you have said, but I don't think many Ontarians consider them to be fair. I ask you, how is taking an extra \$335 from a middle-class family of four fair?

Hon Mr Laughren: The reason I think that the taxes are tough but fair and balanced is that everybody in the province is going to be making a contribution to the solution of the problems that we're in. For the leader of the official opposition to think that there's some way we can exclude everybody out there from the problem makes no sense whatsoever. I mean, the leader of the official opposition doesn't want tax increases. I understand that. The leader of the official opposition doesn't want us to deal with any expenditure reductions. The leader of the official opposition ridicules the social contract we set up to save money in the public sector.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): You saved not a nickel. Don't claim you saved anything yet.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Etobicoke West.

Hon Mr Laughren: For heaven's sake, I wish there was a rule in this Legislature that required the leader of the official opposition to deal with the real world for once in her life and come up with some options. She has nothing but empty rhetoric.

Mrs McLeod: Treasurer, just keep it in perspective. Go slowly. Think with us about this average middle-

class family with two children, and think about the attack that your budget made on middle-class Ontarians like them right across this province. You want more in income taxes from these families—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order, the member for Yorkview.

Mrs McLeod: —as much as \$600, depending on their income. You're asking more in sales tax, in insurance premiums, and you've increased fees on virtually everything else. If they have teenage children, if their two children are teenagers and they want to learn to drive, they're not going to be able to do that through the school system because you've cut out that program. If they want to drive on the highway, your highway crown corporation wants them to pay road tolls. And if instead of having teenagers our average middle-class family happens to have toddlers, you're even going to tax the sand in the sandbox.

Minister, given your tax grab, your record tax grab in yesterday's budget, given your slash-and-burn cuts to many of the services that average Ontarians use, what incentives are there for people to stay here and to work hard? Why wouldn't they just pack their bags and move somewhere else?

Hon Mr Laughren: Just once again to put things in perspective, even with this aggressive tax package that was in the budget yesterday, very tough, very tough—

Mr Sorbara: Floyd, come on.

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): Atila the Hun was a pacifist according to you guys.

The Speaker: Order.

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Hon Mr Laughren: Actually, I don't mind Liberals heckling me on taxes, given their record.

The leader of the official opposition talks about high taxes. I would remind her that even with the increase in provincial income tax for 90% of the people in the province, we are the third-lowest income tax province in Canada. In retail sales taxes, we are right in the middle of all the provinces. We have a more serious problem than other provinces in our debt and deficit, and I think what we've done is a fair and reasonable package. I'm still waiting for one single reasonable alternative from the leader of the official opposition. She has absolutely none.

The Speaker: New question, the leader of the third party.

INCOME TAX

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): In the absence of the Premier, I have a question for the—

Hon Mr Laughren (Minister of Finance): What do you mean "in the absence of"?

Mr Harris: Well, because I think it was the Premier's budget, Mr Treasurer.

I've known the Treasurer for a long time. I heard what he said for 17-odd years in opposition. I've read all the quotes. I heard what he said in his first budget and second budget. I know this one's not his; it's the Premier's. It's Bob Rae's budget. So in the absence of Bob Rae, I'll have to go to the Treasurer.

Yesterday, Minister, you imposed a surtax on many families in Ontario making over \$50,000 a year. I'd like to ask you this, Minister of Finance, or Treasurer: Do you honestly believe that Ontario has sunk so low that a family living in Metropolitan Toronto today with a mortgage to pay and children to clothe and to educate is wealthy at \$50,000? Is that what you're trying to tell us, that in NDP Ontario, \$50,000 is now wealthy?

Hon Mr Laughren: No, absolutely not, and I've never said that. What I have said is that the surtax that applies to the Ontario tax payable is applicable only to the top 10% of income tax filers in the province. That doesn't mean that all of that 10% are wealthy or rich. I've never said that. But those do represent the top 10% of income earners in the province.

Mr Harris: The Treasurer has made great pains to say this is about tax fairness, so now that we understand that \$50,000 in Toronto with a family, with any number of children to feed—now that we understand that's who you think fairly should be bailing you out of your mess, I'd like to ask you this about tax fairness: Yesterday you reached into the pockets of every family of four with two wage earners making a total gross income of \$20,000 a year.

According to your chart, it said, "2. It assumes they're making the same." That assumes they each make \$10,000 a year. For somebody who wants to check the minimum wage, that means that if they're working full-time, they're both working below minimum wage. I don't know how they could be that low legally in the province of Ontario, but they're making \$20,000 a year.

Treasurer, if they can still afford furniture in their apartment, you're going to tax the insurance that they must pay on that furniture. If they can afford a car—I don't know how they could, but perhaps they've got an old one they still have from days when jobs paid more in Ontario—you're going to tax their automobile insurance. Every time they park that car, you're there with your hand out too, taxing the quarter that may go into the meter to park the car.

I would ask you this, Treasurer: Do you honestly expect us and Ontarians to believe that taking more money from this family of four earning a gross amount of \$20,000—is that your idea of tax fairness?

Hon Mr Laughren: I believe the amount would come to roughly a dollar a week. I'm not sure of the exact amount, but I think that would be roughly the amount. I would remind the leader of the third party as well that with this budget, we removed 40,000 people

at the low end of the income scale from Ontario's tax rolls completely and reduced the amount that they pay for another 10,000.

In the last two years, it's well over 200,000 people who we've removed from Ontario's tax rolls at all in an attempt to make the tax system even fairer. I think that because of the moves we've taken at the low end of the income scale by removing people from the Ontario tax rolls, and with the surcharge at the upper end of the income tax scale we have indeed made the income tax system fairer despite what the federal government has done to make it less fair.

Mr Harris: This is your chart. How do you expect your members to go back to their ridings next week and explain that for two people working—with a family of four, earning less than minimum wage—paying \$60 more is fair? You tell me how we're supposed to explain to people this is fair.

This budget of yours was not about tax fairness. In fact, 98% of the tax hikes yesterday hit individuals, working men and women in this province, most of them middle- and lower-income families down to \$20,000 a year. They are the same people who, until yesterday, had already endured 55 Liberal and NDP tax hikes over the last eight years. They're the same people who, budget after budget, for the last eight years, have paid more than their fair share to feed your spending appetite.

By the way, these are the people whose taxes went up the last two years while public sector wage bills went up 19.5%, and now they're up again.

I would ask you this, given that taxpayers—low income, middle income—have been paying more than their fair share for the last eight years and again in your budget, can you tell us exactly when it is we're going to see government contribute its share towards the deficit reduction problem?

Hon Mr Laughren: I would remind the leader of the third party of a number of things. One, in our expenditure reduction plan, the largest single reduction was in government spending in all of the various ministries, to the tune of over \$700 million. That was taking action ourselves within our ministries. We've reduced a lot of the non-salary component of our expenditures by about 25% over the last two years. We have worked extremely hard in getting our expenditures down.

I would remind the leader of the third party as well that while someone earning \$20,000 a year will be paying about \$1 a week more, at least in NDP Ontario they won't have a user fee if they have to go to the hospital or visit their doctor that they would under a Tory government in this province.

Mr Harris: I don't know. For the last eight years, user fees in health care have gone up and up and up and

up. The only people who seem to be able to manage medicare were the people who brought it: the Ontario Progressive Conservatives. They're the people who managed medicare. They're the people who managed it without user fees, not the Liberals, not the NDP.

JOB CREATION

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): My second question is to the Minister of Finance as well. This budget, you said it was fair, you said it was about tax fairness. We pointed out to you: Taxing a family of \$20,000 is not fair. We know now it's not fair.

The second thing you said is this budget is about job creation. This budget, by any definition, is job decimation in the province of Ontario.

For every two jobs, according to your figures, that you claim to create with \$120,000 of government spending, you kill three jobs with \$120,000 worth of taxes of the same amount. For every two you create—spending \$120,000—you destroy three by taxing \$120,000 to spend that money.

Mr Norman W. Sterling (Carleton): Those are your figures.

Mr Harris: These are your figures. Most people in business, industry and the chamber think that it's even more than that, but these are your figures.

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I would ask you this: Since government job creation projects—given to us by Liberal, Conservative, NDP, federal, municipal, provincial—have never created more jobs than they've destroyed, what possesses you to think that this year you and the province of Ontario are different and you can create jobs better than the private sector?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I don't recall saying that, but I would remind the leader of the third party that the private sector laid off 300,000 people in this province in last couple of years; 300,000.

Mr Harris: Paying your taxes.

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): Free trade did it.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order.

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): It is your idiot budget that drove them out—\$10 billion every year. Your idiot budget—\$10 billion every year. Now you have a deficit and are trying to tax them to death.

Mr George Mammoliti (Yorkview): Throw him out.

The Speaker: The member for Yorkview, please come to order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I really didn't think I said anything that provocative, Mr Speaker, but I'll soldier on.

I know that the leader of the third party has been

very consistent. What he has said is that instead of raising taxes, we should be reducing expenditures. He's been very consistent in that. I can tell you that if instead of raising taxes we were to go out and find roughly \$2 billion in expenditure reductions on top of what we've already done, it would do two things. First, it would cause tremendous layoffs out there all across the province. We think it would cause at least 20,000 layoffs. Second, I don't know what that would say about business and consumer confidence in the province if we did that.

I would say to the leader of the third party that I think we have struck the right balance with our mix of expenditure reductions, the social contract savings and the tax increases. I know it's tough, very difficult—I'm not minimizing that at all—but I think it's the right balance to get at the problem we're facing in this province.

Mr Harris: Every study, including Burns Fry, which did an independent study for you, said that for every dollar of spending you can eliminate, every waste of spending, it's worth \$1.25 to you on the deficit. They also told you that for every tax you hike a dollar, it's worth only 75 cents on the deficit because of the jobs that you destroy. Every study tells you this. Your own budget document proves this.

You say if you found another \$2 billion in cuts it would throw people out of work. Let me give you some that won't throw people out of work. If you could solve the fraud problem with \$675 million in health cards, all that would do is stop Americans from accessing our system for free. All that would stop is abuse of the system. Cut down on welfare mismanagement and fraud, the auditor told you. All that stops is fraud. That doesn't throw anybody out of work.

If you cut down on the failed government housing programs, you could save anywhere from a quarter to half a billion dollars and you would put more people back to work and more people in decent housing. If you got government out of day care, you would save a couple of hundred million dollars, provide more people with day care and not throw anybody out of work. In fact, you would upsize the private sector at the same time. There's \$2 billion. Why won't you do that instead of your tax increases?

Hon Mr Laughren: I do wish it was all as simple as the leader of the third party suggests. I know that the leader of the third party has made much to do about whether or not the tax package is fair and balanced. The last thing I want to be today, following a very tough budget, is provocative, other than to say to the leader of the third party that I was here in this assembly back in 1981 when there was a recession, when his government raised the provincial personal income tax by four points. Count them: four points. I can tell you that—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: I will end on a non-provocative note. I just wanted to say to both the opposition parties that the size of the tax increases this year, while they're substantial and they're very difficult, are not disproportionate to the size of the economy, to the tax increases brought in when the Liberals were in office or when the Tories were in office way back then.

Mr Harris: The Treasurer seems to miss the point. The 1981 level of taxation is not a problem; neither is the 1985 level of taxation. It's the cumulative effect, taking all those taxes and adding in 1985, and up in 1986, and up in 1987, and now you, up in 1990, up in 1991, up in 1992. You took all those Tory taxes and all those Liberal taxes and you wanted more. That's the problem. That's why we're overtaxed in this province.

Yesterday you proved what I've been telling you all along. You don't have a revenue problem; you have a spending problem. In your first budget—remember those heady days when you came in here—you saddled Ontario with a \$10-billion deficit and a \$1-billion tax grab. Now, two years later, you give us a \$10-billion deficit and a \$2-billion tax grab.

Here's what you promised us before the budget. You said, "We're going to have a three-pronged attack on the deficit," and you're right. Unlike the Liberals, we support your attack on the deficit. We think it's a problem that has to be dealt with. But you promised a three-pronged attack. You said social contract talks. So far, the unions are in charge of those. We've seen not a cent. The second prong, you promised spending reductions, and this budget brought us spending increases of about \$160 million from last year. You said you were going to cut. You've increased spending from last year. That leaves us with only a one-pronged attack, the taxpayers' prong, \$2 billion.

When are the taxpayers going to see some real cuts instead of a \$160-million hike, and when are we going to see the third prong, some kind of sense that the social contract talks are going to contribute?

Hon Mr Laughren: I would encourage the leader of the third party to go back and read the budget a little more carefully. I remind him that for every dollar of tax increases, we've found \$4 in reductions and savings this year.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. The leader of the third party, please come to order.

Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew North): I think I heard someone say a no-no.

The Speaker: The member for Renfrew North is correct, although I couldn't identify the exact source of the unparliamentary remark. What I would say is that the temperature has risen to a very uncomfortable level, and I would ask all members—

Interjections.

The Speaker: The leader of the third party, order. I ask the leader of the third party to please come to order.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Tell us about the off-book finances.

The Speaker: The member for York Mills, please come to order.

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Hon Mr Laughren: I'll conclude by simply saying that program spending in 1993-94 is down 4.3% over last year, and that is the—

Mr Harris: It is not. Look at page 92 of the budget. Don't stand up and lie. Read your budget.

The Speaker: Order. Could the minister conclude his response, please.

Hon Mr Laughren: Mr Speaker, the leader of the third party referred me to page 92 in the budget, and I refer anyone else to it as well, which shows that program spending in 1992-93 was \$50.195 billion, and for 1993-94 will be \$50.048 billion. That is a decline in program spending, and I can tell you it's the first time in 50 years there's been a decrease in spending in this province. That's what rots his socks, that's what's really getting to him, because most of those 50 years—

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. I really believe that this is not a sensible way to have questions and answers. I don't know how you could hear a response when you're shouting at the person who's trying to give a response.

Hon Mr Laughren: Only once more, Mr Speaker. Only once more will I try. This is—

Mr Ernie L. Eves (Parry Sound): Is that a threat or a promise?

Hon Mr Laughren: No, giving up. It really is the first time in 50 years there's been a reduction in program spending, and what's really making the third party angry is that for most of the years we had a Conservative government and it never, ever accomplished what we're accomplishing this year.

The Speaker: New question. The member for Scarborough-Agincourt.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order. Would the member for York Mills please come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker: The member for Etobicoke West, come to order.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): For me, as I looked at the budget, the most disturbing paragraph in the budget was on page 45 and it says: "During the recession, many workers gave up looking for work.... If these discouraged workers were counted

as 'unemployed,' Ontario's current unemployment rate would be about 14%."

I believe that; I think it is about 14%. I don't see in any of the budget documents the real unemployment rate in Ontario getting below 13%. That, for us, is the most disturbing thing. It is the tragedy of 14% unemployment in the province. I will say it as clearly as I can: This budget, in my opinion, offers no hope.

In the budget, I believe it's fair to say that as a result of your budget implementation the average working person in the province will pay about \$500 more this year in increased retail tax and increased income tax payments; about \$500 for the average working person. I think I can confirm those numbers. Another thing that was lacking in the budget this year was any indication of the job impact. It was noticeable by its lack because in your previous two budgets you had that in.

My question is very simple: For those 14% unemployed, for those 700,000 people who are out of work, what is your estimate of the impact that taking about \$500 per working person out of their pockets will have in terms of job prospects for the province?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): First of all, I agree with the sentiments expressed by the member for Scarborough-Agincourt that when you read the budget that is a very stark paragraph he quoted from, and it bothered me to put it in there. But I think it was the right thing to do, to draw people's attention to the severity of the problem, and while the official rate may drop down to 9%, we all know that the real rate is higher than that. I do think that as the economy recovers, the discouraged-worker syndrome starts plugging into the official number of 9%. I don't think it will be as high as 13%, but I'm not quarrelling with what the member says and the concern he expresses over that level of unemployment.

On the whole question of the Ontario economy and job creation, when I was thinking about the impact of taxes on jobs and job losses and job creation and so forth, I had to think as well about what the alternatives to that were, quite frankly. What is the impact on job creation, particularly by the private sector if we allow the deficit to climb? If we didn't do something about the deficit, I think there'd be real concern out there both at the personal consumer confidence level and particularly at the business confidence level.

I think that taking the tax package in isolation, to be fair—and the member for Scarborough-Agincourt usually is—to take the tax package in isolation isn't fair unless you look at what the alternatives to this package were.

Mr Phillips: I think I understand what you're doing and I would suspect the debt-servicing agencies have indirectly if not directly let the Minister of Finance know how they would view various numbers. I under-

stand that, I understand it completely, and my own view is that after they've looked at this, they probably will view it favourably. That would be my judgement, and we'll only know in a few weeks perhaps. I understand that.

My problem is, this is a budget that tackles their needs. It's not a budget, in my view, that tackles the needs of what I believe are 700,000 unemployed. It seemed to me there was an opportunity to balance that. I understand how we got to this situation and I understand where we are, but I truly believe that this budget could have struck a slightly better balance.

My view is that the tax hikes that we see—and we perhaps understand why you did it—will have a very significant dampening impact on the economy. The Treasurer two years ago said much the same in the budget.

I just say again, can you provide to the House some indication of what impact these tax measures will have in terms of employment in the province?

Hon Mr Laughren: I do find that a difficult question to answer; not that I think it's an unfair question at all, but it's a difficult question to answer because of what it does imply. I think the member for Scarborough-Agincourt would agree that the deficit needs to come down. I think he would agree to that. I'm not putting words in his mouth. I think he would agree to that.

If you accept that as a premise going into this exercise, then it seems to me you have to make a choice. We could have gone back and reduced the expenditures by an equivalent amount or some portion thereof. Our analysis shows that a reduction in expenditures out there in public services all across the province would have somewhere between—and this does get a little bit iffy on the numbers, I appreciate—somewhere between 50% to 75% greater job loss by reducing expenditures out there all across the province than by an equivalent amount of tax increases.

So there is a much heavier job loss associated with going out and reducing expenditures. That's why I have real problems with some of the analysis by the leader of the third party. So that's why we ended up with the kind of balance we did between expenditure reductions and this aggressive tax package.

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ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): The Treasurer's been on the radio saying, "Four for one; we cut \$4 for every tax dollar increase." I think the Treasurer will acknowledge that over an annual basis the net revenue enhancements—that's the new, politically correct NDP buzzword for tax hikes and what not—are \$2 billion; in that range, give or take some.

Treasurer, on page 92, we finally got you in this

Legislature to quote that last year's spending was \$50.195 billion. Your estimates for this year, assuming \$400 million and some savings from somewhere, assuming that you get \$2 billion in savings from social contract talks—that so far are unions \$2 billion and government zero; in fact, so far all they've done is cost us \$100,000—but assuming the full \$2 billion and you find another \$400 million out of Agriculture or Education or health care somewhere, you now say it will be \$50.048 billion. That is an decrease of \$147 million, and taxes are up \$2 billion.

Could you give me the numbers that verify your \$8-billion cut, your four for one that you said. You hiked taxes \$2 billion. I would have expected that you would have been able to verify that with \$8 billion in spending cuts. Your document says \$147 million in spending cuts if you achieve all those things. Can you tell us the discrepancy?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I certainly can. When we were looking at the 1993-94 expenditures, they were going to come in at a certain level.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. Minister.

Hon Mr Laughren: Thank you, Mr Speaker. What I was trying to say before I was interrupted was that we were, in 1993-94, facing a certain level of expenditures. We said, "That is an unacceptable level of expenditures." We reduced those expenditures by \$4 billion. We then said, "That is not enough yet, because we must get the deficit down and get our financial house in order." That's why we are going to find, despite the derision of the opposition, \$2 billion at the social contract table. That comes to \$6 billion. We have tax increases this year of approximately \$1.5 billion. To me, that's \$4 billion in savings over \$1.5 billion in taxes for this year. That's how we arrived at those numbers.

Mr Harris: I want the people in the Legislature, particularly your members as they go back to defend this budget, to clearly understand that the cuts you're talking about were not expenditure cuts but were cuts from this fantasy land that your ministers told you they wanted to spend. They had this fantasy land of what they wanted to spend, about six times increased from the rate of inflation, \$9 billion-some more. So in their fantasy projections of what they wanted to spend, you cut that down. You understand that; I think that's what you've explained.

I would like you to confirm for me just one more time, and for all Ontarians, that you believe the interim 1992-93 expenditures—not interest, not capital, not fudge the books, not any of that—will come in at \$50.195 billion and that you think if you achieve all these savings, your expenditures this year will be

\$50.048 billion, a decrease of 0.03% or \$147 million. Will you confirm that those are the real cuts, and the other ones are the fantasy cuts from what your cabinet ministers wanted to spend?

Hon Mr Laughren: The cuts were from programs that were already committed to for 1993-94.

Mr Harris: By who? In your minds, in the fantasy minds of the cabinet ministers.

Interjections.

The Speaker: Order.

Hon Mr Laughren: The leader of the third party—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): How can it be cut? It's never been spent.

The Speaker: Order. The member for Etobicoke West, please come to order. If he persists, he will be named.

The leader of the third party asked a very serious question. I presume he would like a response. You cannot hear the response if you are busy shouting at the person to whom the question was directed. Minister.

Hon Mr Laughren: Thank you, Mr Speaker. If the leader of the third party thinks that the reductions in unconditional grants were phantom, let him tell the municipalities that, and I'll tell every mayor to call the leader of the third party, who will tell them it's a phantom reduction in unconditional grants. Is that what the leader of the third party is saying?

Those reductions are real reductions in committed spending for 1993-94, and if the leader of the third party doesn't understand what a real cut in spending is, I would urge him to go out there and talk to the mayors all across this province.

GOVERNMENT BORROWING

Mr Paul Wessinger (Simcoe Centre): My question is also to the Minister of Finance, and it arises with respect to his comments yesterday.

He indicates that, "About two thirds of our new borrowing comes from outside Canada—which means that most of the interest we pay on this borrowing goes to foreign bankers, investors and economies."

Then, when he raises concern about the increased debt, he said, "More and more of our tax dollars would go to pay government bond holders in New York, Zurich, Tokyo and elsewhere instead of being invested here in Ontario—in Ontario services and Ontario jobs."

If you add to that the whole question of the fact that I say many commentators recognize that the major concern about deficit really ought to be concerning our balance of payments deficit, therefore, I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance, why is Ontario doing so much of its borrowing outside the country and why don't we do more borrowing domestically?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I appreciate the question, because it is one I get asked

quite often from people in different parts of the province.

The fact of the matter is, when we're out there, as a province, borrowing over \$1 billion a month, the capital markets in this province simply cannot supply that kind of capital to this province. You think about the needs of the federal government on borrowing, the needs of the municipal sector, the needs of all the other provinces for borrowing, and I take no great pride in saying this, but I can tell you that the capital markets in this country cannot provide that amount of capital. It really is as simple as that.

But it's also, for me, a reason why addressing the deficit is important, because I've always said that transferring money from taxpayers in this province, through interest on the public debt, to wealthy bond holders in some other country is a truly perverse redistribution of income, and I'd like to minimize that as much as possible.

Mr Wessenger: My supplemental is also related to the whole question of borrowing, and it relates to some of the comments and suggestions that I have read with respect to our monetary policy in this country.

The suggestion has been made that presently, in our monetary policy, the Bank of Canada is lending very little money to the federal government with respect to financing the deficit and that we ought to do as we did perhaps in the war time, where the Bank of Canada lent money to governments to spend.

Considering the fact that we don't have all the external pressure on the economy with respect to inflationary pressure at the present time, why wouldn't it be possible for the Bank of Canada not only to perhaps consider lending to the government of Canada, but also to consider lending to the provinces?

Hon Mr Laughren: That's a relatively complex question. The Bank of Canada simply does not lend to the provinces. If they were to go out and borrow money through some mechanism, they would simply be competing in the same capital markets as we are in order to do that. If, on the other hand, they were to use the monetary system and print money, then that has its own particular set of problems, as the member will be aware.

Over the last number of years—and I think this will come as no surprise to anyone—we've certainly had a quarrel with the federal government on its rather restrictive monetary policies. I certainly identify with the sentiments of the member, but it's simply not going to happen through the Bank of Canada.

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AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): Can the Minister of Finance tell us what is fair about increasing the cost of auto insurance by 5%, which is to be paid directly to him?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): I know you didn't mean me personally when you said that.

Mr Elston: Well, you're the revenue minister, so it does go to you personally.

Hon Mr Laughren: It goes to the consolidated revenue fund. When we were looking at the tax package, as I call it, and we had a target of achieving so much revenue, we looked at the whole question of the retail sales tax, whether or not to raise it a point, whether or not to expand the base and, if we did so, how broadly to expand the base.

In the end, we settled upon putting the sales tax on some insurance policies and on auto insurance, but, recognizing the auto insurance rates as being somewhat volatile over the years, we would put only a 5% sales tax on the auto insurance rather than the 8% which is applied to other forms of insurance. In the end, it was, I must confess to the member, a revenue decision as well.

Mr Elston: He's made great things about this being a budget that is fair although tough. But people cannot have an option to drive automobiles without auto insurance premiums being paid. They have no option not to have general insurance coverage on their homes and other places, such as businesses, and those insurance premiums have both been attached with a retail sales tax increase: one, 5%, which is in addition to the 3% existing premium tax; the other, 8% on general insurance coverage.

I want the minister to answer the question that I asked first: What is fair about the application of a new tax on mandatory expenditures for the people, whether they are rich, poor or otherwise, in this province? What is so fair about it?

Hon Mr Laughren: I suppose the member could ask that question about any tax on any commodity that's regarded as an essential—

Interjections.

Hon Mr Laughren: Would you let me finish? I was saying that; I was trying to accommodate that factor in my answer. I said that the member could say that about a tax on anything that could be considered a mandatory or essential service.

Interjection: Like income tax.

Hon Mr Laughren: Like income tax. Income is essential to live in this country as well, and we put a tax on income. So I think the member for Bruce could argue that the tax could have been put on some other product or service, but I'm afraid that I—

Mr Elston: What's fair?

Hon Mr Laughren: I'm afraid that I can't expect an alternative from the Liberals, because they're not coming up with any at all.

ASSISTED HOUSING

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): My question is to the Deputy Premier, in the absence of the Minister of Housing. Yesterday, Deputy Premier, you announced that in 1993-94—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): Order. In the noise, I missed even to whom the question is directed. I know the member did state it. Would you be kind enough to state it again.

Mrs Marland: Mr Speaker, I wonder if you'd put some time back on the clock.

My question is to the Deputy Premier, in the absence of the Minister of Housing.

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): That's what she said the first time.

Mrs Marland: And that's what I said the first time.

Deputy Premier, yesterday you announced in your budget that for this year and next year there would be 14,000 more government-assisted housing units in your wonderful housing program. I would like tell you that you also announced yesterday that it costs \$854 to subsidize the families in non-profit units per month on average. You also said yesterday that the subsidy can run as high as \$2,000 per unit per month.

We also know, from figures you gave out yesterday, that the social assistance recipients get up to \$460 a month per unit. This means that it costs twice as much for needy families to live in non-profit housing units owned and operated by the government as it does to give them a direct rental subsidy.

Minister, I think what we need to know from you is, why is your government continuing with this program when you are working on figures which apparently the standing committee on public accounts cannot get, nor can the auditor get these figures from the Ministry of Housing? We simply say to you, if you can't tell the auditor in this province what the figures really are, will you put a hold on all your public housing units from this day forward until we know whether there's value for money in the Ministry of Housing?

Hon Floyd Laughren (Deputy Premier): I have no hesitation in saying that one of the programs of which this government is the most proud is our housing program. Not only does it provide for the housing for people in this province—

Interjection.

The Speaker: Order, the member for York Mills.

Hon Mr Laughren: —but it also creates much-needed jobs in the construction sector. So I think that the member is being somewhat unfair in implying that we don't need any more social housing program in this province. I think we do need one, I think we've got a good program and we intend to continue it.

PETITIONS

GAMBLING

Mr Hugh O'Neil (Quinte): I have a petition that has been submitted to me by members of the Tabernacle United Church in the city of Belleville and it reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling; and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and

"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have, since 1976, on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

NATIVE HUNTING AND FISHING

Mr Allan K. McLean (Simcoe East): "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 1923, seven Ontario bands signed the Williams Treaty, which guaranteed that native peoples would fish and hunt according to provincial and federal conservation laws, like everyone else; and

"Whereas the bands were paid the 1993 equivalent of \$20 million; and

"Whereas that treaty was upheld by Ontario's highest court last year; and

"Whereas Bob Rae is not enforcing existing laws which prohibit native peoples from hunting and fishing out of season; and

"Whereas this will put at risk an already pressured part of Ontario's natural environment;

"We, the undersigned, adamantly demand that the government honour the principles of fish and wildlife conservation, to respect our native and non-native ancestors and to respect the Williams Treaty."

That's signed by 113 people and I've affixed my name to it.

GAMBLING

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): "Whereas the Christian is called to love of neighbour, which includes a concern for the general wellbeing of

society; and

"Whereas there is a direct link between the higher availability of legalized gambling and the incidence of addictive gambling (Macdonald and Macdonald, *Pathological Gambling: The Problem, Treatment and Outcome*, Canadian Foundation on Compulsive Gambling); and

"Whereas the damage of addiction to gambling in individuals is compounded by the damage done to families, both emotionally and economically; and

"Whereas the gambling market is already saturated with various kinds of government-operated lotteries; and
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"Whereas large-scale gambling activity invariably attracts criminal activity; and

"Whereas the citizens of Detroit have since 1976 on three occasions voted down the introduction of casinos into that city, each time with a larger majority than the time before,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario cease all moves to establish gambling casinos."

It is signed by approximately 15 constituents of Scarborough Centre.

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS

Mr Steven W. Mahoney (Mississauga West): I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in the fall session of the Legislature, which was held from September 30 to December 10, 1992, the Premier was absent 16 days, the Minister of Finance was absent seven days and ministers were absent for a total of 142 days during a 29-day sitting"—good trick.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Minister days.

Mr Mahoney: Minister days, thank you.

"Whereas so far in this current spring session of the Legislature from April 14 to May 20"—

Interjections.

Mr Mahoney: Mr Speaker, how can you get heckled when you're reading a petition?

—"the Premier has been absent nine days, the Minister of Finance...seven days and ministers...a total of 105" minister "days,

"Therefore, we the people of Ontario request that this session of the Legislature meet during the week of May 25 to May 27."

I, prepared to work during that week, will be delighted to add my name here.

GAMBLING

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): I have a petition, and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has traditionally had a commitment to family life and quality of life for all the citizens of Ontario; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas the NDP government has had an historical concern for the poor in society, who are particularly at risk each time the practice of gambling is expanded; and

"Whereas the NDP has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the citizens of Ontario have not been consulted regarding the introduction of legalized gambling casinos despite the fact that such a decision is a significant change of government policy and was never part of the mandate given to the government by the people of Ontario,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos by regulation and that appropriate legislation be introduced into the assembly, along with a process which includes significant opportunities for public consultation and full public hearings as a means of allowing the citizens of Ontario to express themselves on this new and questionable initiative."

I support this petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): I am presenting a petition on behalf of 93 residents of the city of St Catharines, and the final "be it resolved" is:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in the fall session of the Legislature, which was held from September 30 to December 10, 1992, the Premier was absent 16 days, the Minister of Finance was absent seven days and ministers were absent for a total of 142" minister "days during a 29-day sitting; and

"Whereas so far in this current spring session of the Legislature from April 14 to May 20, 1993, the Premier has been absent nine days, the Minister of Finance has been absent" again, "seven days and ministers have been absent for a total of"—get this—"105" minister "days,

"We, the people of Ontario, request that this session

of the Legislature meet during the week of May 25 to May 27, 1993."

I'm going to sign this petition because I am in full support of it.

The Speaker (Hon. David Warner): The member for Waterloo North.

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition—

Hon Bud Wildman (Minister of Environment and Energy and Minister Responsible for Native Affairs): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: It would be helpful to the House if the member would make clear how many people signed that petition. I'd also like to know if it is in order to draw attention to a member's absence or presence.

The Speaker: It's not necessary to indicate how many persons have signed any particular petition.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I have a petition, signed by 98 people in the region of Waterloo, to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

I'm pleased to affix my signature.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr Ron Eddy (Brant-Haldimand): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, hereby request you to vote against the passing of Bill 38, an amendment of the Retail Business Holidays Act to permit wide-open Sunday shopping and eliminate Sunday as a legal holiday. We believe that this bill defies God's law, violates the principle of religious freedom, reduces the quality of life, removes all legal protection to workers regarding when they must work, and will reduce rather than improve the prosperity of our province.

"The observance of Sunday as a non-working day was not invented by man but dates from God's creation, and is an absolute necessity for the wellbeing of all people, both physically and spiritually. We beg you to defeat the passing of Bill 38."

Signed by 127 residents of Ontario.

GAMBLING

Mr Cameron Jackson (Burlington South): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the New Democratic Party government has not consulted the citizens of the province regarding the expansion of gambling; and

"Whereas families are made more emotionally and economically vulnerable by the operation of various gaming and gambling ventures; and

"Whereas credible academic studies have shown that state-operated gambling is nothing more than a regressive tax on the poor; and

"Whereas the New Democratic Party has in the past vociferously opposed the raising of moneys for the state through gambling; and

"Whereas the government has not attempted to address the very serious concerns that have been raised by groups and individuals regarding the potential growth in crime,

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the government immediately cease all moves to establish gambling casinos and refrain from introducing video lottery terminals in the province of Ontario."

This is signed by quite a few constituents in my riding and has my signature of support as well.

BRUCE GENERATING STATION

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): "We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"When discussing the future of Bruce A, to consider that the undersigned are in full support of the continued operation of all of the units at Bruce A. Furthermore, we support the expenditure of the required money to rehabilitate the Bruce A units for the following reasons:

"In comparison to other forms of generation, nuclear energy is environmentally safe and cost-effective. Rehabilitating Bruce A units is expected to achieve \$2 billion in savings to the corporation over the station's lifetime. This power is needed for the province's future prosperity.

"A partial or complete closure of Bruce A will have severe negative impacts on the affected workers and will seriously undermine the economy of the surrounding communities and the province."

In addition to these people, who hail from Kincardine, Inverhuron and areas surrounding the Bruce A units, I have attached my signature, together with the support of business, labour and other groups in the area.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Mr Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville): I have a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the following undersigned citizens of Leeds and

Grenville, members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 439, employed at the Brockville Psychiatric Hospital, beg leave to petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government must immediately reset its course to build an Ontario society which is fair and just, protecting those who are most vulnerable within it, and not scapegoat public sector workers in times of economic difficulty.

"Further, the government must respect these fundamental principles: free collective bargaining, a strong public sector and the strengthening of public services."

I've affixed my signature in support, and I'm sending a Decter dollar, face value less than nothing, over to the Treasurer.

LAND-LEASE COMMUNITIES

Mr Larry O'Connor (Durham-York): I've got a petition here:

"We, the residents of land-lease communities, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the residents of Sutton-By-The-Lake felt the previous government set up a committee to report on land-lease communities but took no specific action to protect these communities;

"Whereas residents of Sutton-By-The-Lake feel it should be a priority of this government to release the report and take action to bring legislation on the following issues surrounding land-lease communities;

"Whereas the residents feel that the government of Ontario should examine the problem of no protection against conversion to other uses which would result in the loss of home owners' equity;

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"Whereas the residents of these communities do not receive concise and clear information on their property tax bills;

"Whereas there are often arbitrary rules set by landlords and owners of land-lease communities which place unfair restrictions and collect commissions on the resale of residents' homes;

"Whereas there has been a long confusion around status of residents in land-lease communities where they fall under the rent review legislation,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to follow through."

Considering that Mr Wessenger has introduced the bill, I think these people will be quite satisfied. I've signed my name to this petition.

ATTENDANCE OF MINISTERS

Mr Frank Miclash (Kenora): I have a petition that's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads:

"Whereas in the fall session of the Legislature, which was held from September 30 to December 10, 1992, the

Premier was absent 16 days, the Minister of Finance was absent seven days and the ministers were absent a total of 142" minister "days during a 29-day sitting; and

"Whereas so far in this current spring session of the Legislature from April 14 to May 20, 1993, the Premier has been absent nine days, the Minister of Finance has been absent seven days and ministers have been absent a total of 105" minister "days,

"We, the people of Ontario, request that this session of the Legislature meet during the week of May 25 to May 27, 1993."

I have attached my name to that as well.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr David Tilson (Dufferin-Peel): I have a petition of 39 signatures from people in my riding. It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

"Whereas the people of Ontario are undergoing economic hardship, high unemployment and are faced with the prospect of imminent tax increases; and

"Whereas the Ontario motorist protection plan currently delivers cost-effective insurance benefits to Ontario drivers; and

"Since the passing of Bill 164 into law will result in higher automobile insurance premiums for Ontario drivers,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That Bill 164 be withdrawn."

EDUCATION FINANCING

Mr Stephen Owens (Scarborough Centre): On behalf of the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere, I'd like to present the following petition:

"Whereas the British North America Act of 1867 recognizes the right of Catholic students to a Catholic education, and in keeping with this, the province of Ontario supports two educational systems from kindergarten to grade 12/OAC; and

"Whereas the Metropolitan Separate School Board educates more than 104,000 students across Metro Toronto; and

"Whereas these students represent 30% of the total number of students in this area, yet has access to just 20% of the total residential assessment and 9.5% of the pooled corporate assessment; and

"Whereas the Metropolitan Separate School Board is able to spend \$1,678 less on each of its elementary school students and \$2,502 less on each of its secondary school students than our public school counterpart,

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to act now and restructure the way in which municipal and provincial tax dollars are apportioned, so that Ontario's two principal education

systems are funded not only fully but with equity and equality."

I affix my signature of support.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): The time allotted for the presentation of petitions has expired.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): On a point of privilege, Mr Speaker: With respect to the time period allocated for petitions, it is the tradition of this House, as I understand it, that petitions will be presented on behalf of the constituents of members and that these petitions will have to follow a proper form, that name, address and etc will be included and that, in the traditions of this House, it's uncouth and unacceptable for members to draw attention to the absences of other members in this Legislature. My privileges have been violated, as have those of the member for Burlington, who tried to present a petition and had not had time, by the superfluous presentation of petitions by the Liberal Party.

Given that we, as members of this Legislature, have access to redress through you, through the Chair, in violation of the rules, and that the petition that has been presented by the member for Mississauga West was signed by him and by the member for Eglinton and no one else, this violates my privileges as a member in this Legislature, and I would ask that you comment on that.

The Speaker (Hon David Warner): This is fairly simple and straightforward. To the member for Durham West, first, there is no vetting procedure here for petitions. A petition will be presented by a member of the House. The table will determine whether or not the petition is in order. If it is not in order, it will be returned.

Secondly, there is nothing to prevent a member from petitioning on his or her own on a matter which is of concern to the member.

Thirdly, we have nothing in our standing orders with respect to the attendance of members. I would draw to the member's attention that in some provinces indeed the assemblies do have a financial penalty for absence from the chamber, but that is not the case here. The member does not have a point of order.

Mr Murray J. Elston (Bruce): On the same point, Mr Speaker: Something that you didn't mention in the context of the petition that was read was that the ministers are to attend for particular functions and all that was being done was indicating that the people were not here. There doesn't seem to me, Mr Speaker, to be any reason why the people of the province shouldn't know that the Premier was not here on 16 separate occasions.

The Speaker: No, I have addressed the point of order that was raised.

Reports by committees? Introduction of bills? The member for York Centre.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I have a great deal of respect for your rulings.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL ACT, 1993

On motion by Mr Sorbara, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr77, An Act respecting the Town of Richmond Hill.

CITY OF LONDON ACT (COVENT GARDEN MARKET CORPORATION), 1993

On motion by Mr Winninger, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr4, An Act respecting the City of London and Covent Garden Building Incorporated.

OPTIMIST CLUB OF KITCHENER-WATERLOO ACT, 1993

On motion by Mrs Witmer, the following bill was given first reading:

Bill Pr85, An Act to revive The Optimist Club of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

1993 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Leader of the Opposition): Yesterday, this government presented its budget. This morning, there were members of our caucus who were out in 10 communities across this province. We wanted to get out as quickly as possible because we wanted to talk to people in the communities. We wanted to talk to municipal leaders, to business leaders, we talked to union representatives, we talked to average taxpayers of the communities of this province to find out what they thought of this budget.

I can tell you that as we talked to about a thousand people in communities across the province this morning, there was really a pretty uniform reaction to this government's budget. It was shock, it was despair, it was anger, it was the sense that this budget leaves the people of this province with no hope about what their future looks like over the next months and years.

The one thing I found very interesting was that there were not a lot of questions about the budget, because there is not much in this budget but taxes. There is nothing new in this budget except taxes and more taxes and more taxes: \$2 billion in more taxes, the largest tax grab in the history of this province.

There is a 3% increase in the personal income tax, which is the largest increase in personal income tax since the last Tory budget of 1981, which was the record for the largest tax grab in the history of the province of Ontario until yesterday.

We pretty well knew what was going to be in the budget because the Treasurer had made it clear that it was going to be a budget that would bring in new taxes. We urged him to understand that this was the worst possible time to bring in new taxes, because we were convinced and we are still convinced that at this time in the history of the province of Ontario, in these economic circumstances, any new taxes were just going to put more people out of business and more people out of work, and with 575,000 people out of work in this province, the last thing any of us wanted to see was a budget that was going to put even more people out of work.

Mr Speaker, \$2 billion in new taxes means 50,000 more Ontarians are going to be out of work. We keep asking the government what studies it has done that would say to us, "No, that's not true, there won't be 50,000 people out of work," but the government refuses to answer the question, because it has no studies to say that this budget will create jobs, that this budget will not put 50,000 more people out of work, because it has no response to the sheer reality of the fact that this budget with its new taxes is going to mean that more Ontarians are out of work. Two billion dollars, 50,000 lost jobs. The mathematics is all too simple. New taxes means lost jobs, and \$2 billion in taxes means 50,000 lost jobs.

Our unemployment rate is already at 10.7%—record highs in this province. Fifty thousand more people out of work will drive that unemployment level up to 11.7%.

The Conference Board of Canada last week said that economic growth will not be as healthy in Ontario as we had hoped, and that was before the government brought this budget in.

The tax grab that this Treasurer, that this government, brought in in this budget yesterday exceeds anybody's worst fears. It exceeds anything that we believed possible from this Treasurer in this budget. It is going to make the gloomiest predictions a reality. Members of the government go by and say, "Is the opposition leader being gloomy again?" You'd better believe I'm being gloomy again, because this budget does nothing but give us reason for despair about what we are going to see in this province over the next year.

We genuinely hoped—because we don't enjoy being gloomy about the future of the people of this province—for a budget that would stimulate the economy, and instead of that, the government has given us a budget that's going to strangle it.

We have a personal income tax increase that gives the government \$1 billion of its \$2-billion tax grab, and it is an increase that is going to hit all but a very few people. We said earlier today, just using the government's own figures, that a single-income family of four making about \$50,000 a year is going to pay at least

\$330 more in taxes because of this budget.

We see the new tax on auto insurance, which clearly can't be seen as fair because it's a tax which everybody who drives a car has to pay because they have to have auto insurance. That's going to mean an increase of \$75 for a 25-year-old single driver. This is a tax that probably hurts the young people of this province more than any other group of people.

Mr Speaker, you say: "How is it possible that \$2 billion in taxes can possibly mean 50,000 people out of work. How can it have that kind of an effect on the economy?" It's just a simple reality, and again, the math is only too simple, because people who are paying more taxes are not going to be encouraged to go out and buy a new car. The auto dealers were telling me just last week that they're not seeing people buying new cars now because people are so worried about their economic futures. After yesterday, there is very little chance that they're going to have the confidence they need to go out and make that purchase. We're not going to see people going out and buying new houses. We're not even likely going to see people shop on Sundays, if it finally becomes legal in this province to shop on Sundays.

It is a sad reality that the economic renewal that we so desperately need in this province, and that absolutely must be driven by consumer confidence is not going to happen because of this budget, because of a budget that is going to destroy consumer confidence and freeze consumer spending, and it does mean that more people are going to lose their jobs.

We know that the budget hits very hard at every individual taxpayer, at every individual family, at middle-class Ontarians, but there's no question too, as we look at the details of this budget, that it hits specific industries with even more tax increases.

We can see the effect that this budget is going to have on the tourist industry, as they cancelled the Ontario—Incredible! rebate tax, which is no more, we can see the impact that it's going to have on the hospitality industry, the impact that it's going to have on the construction industry. And I have to ask: Can anybody think of any reason why the government would want to put the tourism industry, the hospitality industry, the construction industry, all industries that are struggling to survive, all industries that have been laying off people because they are struggling to stay alive, under even more stress?

I wonder why the government doesn't seem to realize that one of those just little incidental taxes that was in that list of 20 new taxes that were introduced in this budget, that little incidental tax, the sales tax that is now going to be on sand and clay and soil and gravel and stone, is going to mean more expensive houses, is going to mean more costly roads, is going to mean that we will have to spend more money to build the school buildings that are needed. Or it may mean that there are

just not going to be new houses built, it's going to mean there aren't going to be the new roads built that we need, that maybe we won't be able to build the schools that our children are going to need because it has just been too costly to continue to provide them and because the companies that would build them are not going to be able to stay alive.

I wonder whether the government even looked at the economic impact of simply removing the sales tax exemption on sand and soil and clay and stone and realized that taking the tax exemption off sand and soil and clay and stone actually hurts people and makes it less likely that people are going to get the kinds of services they need, and less likely that communities are going to get the kind of roads and housing construction that they need for their own economic development.

Because we look at a budget and say, "Is there something good in this budget? Is there something positive that we can say about this budget?" we did expect to see that in this budget the Treasurer was going to remove the corporate concentration tax. He signalled that very clearly; the Premier signalled it very clearly and the Treasurer nodded in the House, so we assumed that meant that we would see the removal of the corporate concentration tax in this budget.

I can tell you, as a member of the government that introduced the corporate concentration tax, we were prepared to see that tax go because we believed that removing that tax would be an important signal of support for economic growth in the greater Toronto area, that it would be one small stimulus that would encourage a turnaround in what has been tremendous economic difficulty for people in the greater Toronto area. So we were ready to applaud the removal of the corporate concentration tax.

If only they had simply removed the tax so that removing that tax might have been a stimulus to new development in the greater Toronto area. But instead of simply providing business with this rather small stimulus, they took away the benefits that they'd just given by introducing 20 new taxes.

The Treasurer, who is just returning to the House, will attest to the fact that even as he took off the corporate concentration tax, he brought in 20 new taxes that affect business in one way or another, as well as bringing in something called a minimum corporate tax, which he did promise to bring in a year ago and which has been hanging over everybody's head.

He brought in an 8% tax on general insurance, so that every company that has insurance on its building is going to pay more. If you're a business that happens to have insurance benefit policies for your employees, you're going to pay more for that as well. If you're a business that happens to have a fleet of cars or a business that operates a fleet of school buses, you're going to be hit with the tax on auto insurance.

There's no question that both businesses and individuals alike are going to have to pay this new tax on parking. We did have a lot of questions about how this tax on metered parking was going to work. Were people going to have to somehow retool all their parking meters so they could add a penny with their quarter in order to pay the tax on metered parking? But what we realized was—

Hon Floyd Laughren (Minister of Finance): Did you figure it out?

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Mrs McLeod: Yes, I say to the Minister of Finance, we did figure it out.

This tax on metered parking that you managed to include in this massive tax grab was just one more of those offloads on to the municipalities, because the only way you're going to be able to collect it is to take it right out of the revenues that the municipalities collect from metered parking.

Then there is that minimum corporate tax the Treasurer said last year he was going to bring in that has been kind of hanging like a sword over any prospect of future investment in this province. In this budget he said, "Yes, I am going to bring in a minimum corporate tax." It's still not in place, but we've got to the stage where he has presented a paper that says what a minimum corporate tax might look like and he has suggested that it may bring in \$100 million in the next fiscal year. Interesting that, as he takes off the corporate concentration tax and loses about \$112 million in revenue there, he manages to replace that by bringing in a minimum corporation tax.

It is a fact that although that tax doesn't come into being in this budget year, the fact that it is to come at all is going to have an immediate and a significant effect on attracting investment to this province. I wish the Minister of Finance and I wish his government could understand how important it is that we really do attract investment to this province so we can get the revenue growth, so that we can get the revenues up in far greater amounts than he is going to gain with a minimum corporation tax that is just going to drive more people out of this province.

It's sometimes a little bit difficult to know exactly how the government comes up with the revenue estimates from its new taxes. They say they're going to get \$1 billion more in personal income tax, then they say they're going to get \$825 million more in retail tax changes, if we look at the full-year impact of that, and then they're going to look for another \$112 million in corporation tax. But it seems that they really don't take into account the fact of what new taxes are going to do to consumer purchases and how much revenue they're going to lose because they've brought the new taxes in.

I just wonder whether the Treasurer would be able to

tell us what kind of analysis they've done about how much revenue is going to be lost rather than gained as a result of the 20 new taxes and \$2-billion tax grab this budget has given this province.

That is just kind of an initial look at the taxes that are highlighted in the budget yesterday, and I haven't even started to look yet at all of those fee increases. The fee increases are all of those little extras. They didn't make it into the Treasurer's statement—

Hon Mr Laughren: Why haven't you looked at them?

Mrs McLeod: The Treasurer asks why we haven't looked at them. I'm just getting to that point, Treasurer.

You were not anxious to draw great attention to your fee increases when you made the statement in your budget presentation yesterday. The fee increases, the royalty increases, weren't part of the \$2-billion tax grab that you did talk about. You had to go to page 66 of the budget, actually, to find those fee increases and the royalty increases, and I suspect that if we hadn't gone to page 66 of the budget, we'd never have heard about them because the Treasurer doesn't come into the House and make statements in the House about the fact that he's made these fee increases.

There are no press announcements that go with these hidden tax increases. Usually the way in which we find out about these is when they start to hit the people out in our ridings and we get the calls in our constituency office saying, "Did you know how much my driver's licence fee went up this year?"

There's one particular fee increase in that list on page 66 which I was really shocked by when I finished listening to the Treasurer and went and looked at what all was in the budget he presented, and that's what the budget is going to do to the forest industry as it looks for \$25 million in new stumpage fees.

If you're not from my part of the province in northern Ontario, if you're not from a community that is dependent on a healthy forest industry for economic survival, you may not think that page 66 of the budget, where it says there is going to be \$25 million more taken from stumpage fees for cutting trees in the province, is something to worry about very much.

But I can tell you that is about a 25% to 30% increase in the tax that forestry companies have to pay for their use of that resource, and that might be even more than 25% or 30% if we remember that less and less is being harvested because more and more forestry companies have been going out of business.

I have to ask, as we look at \$25 million more that is to come from stumpage fees for harvesting crown timber, where is the commitment that has always been part of the government of Ontario's commitment to our resources? Where is the commitment that the dollars that are taken from the industry for the use of the

resource will be put back into forest renewal? This is a government that has taken more and more in taxes at the same time that it cuts back on its forest regeneration budget. I think that is one truly shocking thing to be found on page 66 of this budget.

Then if we look again at page 66, we've got \$39 million more that's going to come from those motor vehicle licences that we heard about in our constituency offices when people went in to get their driver's licence this year; and the \$2 million from the registrar general premium service fees, which I know we're going to hear a lot about in our constituency offices when that begins to have an effect. Then there's the \$21 million more from the land registration fees.

What really got me was that in this desperate tax grab, this desperate attempt to find dollars everywhere they could find dollars—and I'm not surprised I guess that the Premier was not in the House today for question period, that he was, as I understand it, in the depths of Algonquin Park, probably looking if he could find anything else that was moving that he could possibly tax while they were at it—they couldn't even bypass trying to get an extra I think it's about \$100,000 from commercial fish royalties. I have to wonder how many commercial fishermen there are left in this province to pay any royalties at all.

The list goes on and on and on: 20 new corporate and personal tax increases and 25 separate increases in fees and licences and royalties. I would suggest to you that for working people this budget is truly a disaster; for people who have no work, this budget offers no hope; for business, it clearly offers no help; for investors, it offers no incentive. The people across Ontario are going to be absolutely devastated by the budget that this government has given them.

I would add to all of this the chaos, the sheer chaos of what will continue to be this government's completely mismanaged efforts to reduce its spending by the \$4-billion target that the Treasurer has given himself.

Yesterday we were presented with a budget that had one focus and one focus only. The focus was clearly to bring the deficit down. Not to bring the deficit down from \$17 billion—we've never believed that the government had done that badly; we've never believed it was quite as high as \$17 billion. But certainly their focus was to bring that deficit down from an equally incredible level—talk about Ontario—Incredible!—of \$14 billion or \$15 billion.

We agreed there was no question, I say to the Finance minister, that deficit reduction had to be a focus of his budget, because we cannot live even now with a debt that is going to continue to grow by \$9 billion at least this year and by \$6.8 billion next year if the Treasurer is able to meet his deficit targets.

We know, because we have looked at the Treasurer's

fiscal outlook in this budget, that even if the government is successful in meeting this year's budget target and next year's budget target, the debt in the election year of 1994-95, the debt that will be in place in this province by the time the next government takes over, will be about \$85.5 billion.

Hon Mr Laughren: And you want it higher.

Mrs McLeod: And no, we do not want that debt higher; we want that debt lower. We want that deficit target met. We think it is totally unacceptable that we are adding to the debt of this province with an annual deficit that has exceeded \$10 billion a year.

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We know what that kind of debt means. We know that debt means that we are going to see \$1 billion more spent on interest every year, even though the Treasurer has left the interest on the debt out of his operating expenditures so that he can show the decrease in spending rather than the increase of \$2 billion in interest costs that are in fact in this expenditure budget. We know that debt is going to take at least \$1 billion more in interest every year.

Do you know what that means, Mr Speaker? That means a deficit, a debt that is going to continue to paralyse government, not just this government, not just next year's government, but governments year after year after that, until that debt can be brought under control. A debt of \$86 billion means that just to pay the interest on the debt will cost us more than it costs us to educate the children of this province, and we cannot live with that kind of legacy. We are prepared to support a tough deficit reduction budget, but we do ask, in all seriousness, how likely it is that this government is likely to reach its deficit target goals.

It is shocking that after all that this government has tried to do in the last six weeks, that after all the spending reduction targets it has set for itself, the deficit is still \$9.2 billion. What is even more shocking is that the government that projected a deficit last year of \$9.9 billion was so far off target, so far off the "spot on" that the Finance minister used to talk about, that the actual deficit turned out to be—surprise—\$12 billion.

Hon Mr Laughren: Haven't heard me say that for a long time.

Mrs McLeod: The Finance minister says we haven't heard him say that for a long time. Let me remind him of how far back it was when the treasury critic for our party said: "Treasurer, your deficit is not \$9.9 billion. You haven't kept your deficit under \$10 billion. Your deficit at year-end is going to be \$12 billion." The treasury critic of this party said that an hour after he brought in last year's budget, and the Treasury critic for the Liberal Party was spot on, Treasurer. We only wish you had heard the message.

But you know, what is even more shocking is that the

Treasurer said that his budget—this was when he brought in last year's budget and he talked about a \$9.9-billion deficit, the one that turned into \$12 billion—he also said that when he brought in his budget in 1993-94, the deficit would be \$8.1 billion. Can you remember back that far, Treasurer, to when you thought that the deficit in 1993-94 was going to be \$8.1 billion? Then you thought it was going to be \$17 billion, twice as much as what you had projected it was going to be?

I say to the Finance minister, let's just look at the record of his government, of his budgets, of his deficit projections and his complete inability to understand how serious the financial situation of this province was in time to do something about it. Let me take the time to just review this government's record, to make sure that it is absolutely clear to the people of this province and to the members of this government.

In 1991-92, the first budget presented by this government and this Treasurer, the budget plan was for a deficit of \$9.7 billion. Shocking, but that was the plan. The deficit at year-end: \$10.9 billion, \$1 billion more than the Treasurer had projected it would be.

In 1992-93 the budget plan was for a deficit of \$9.9 billion; the deficit at year-end was \$12 billion, exactly what the treasury critic of our party said it would be.

In 1992-93, that same budget year, the Treasurer projected that the budget deficit in 1993-94 would be \$8 billion, and then he said it would be \$17 billion, twice as large as they had projected it. That is this government's record, and that's what gives us some very real questions about any confidence that this year's budget target can be met.

I do want to take a minute to recognize that it's not that we don't have some history of deficit and debt in the province of Ontario. We're shocked by the level that this debt has climbed to. We're shocked by the sheer magnitude of this deficit. But we do have a history of deficit and debt in the province, and the Treasurer will probably be quite happy to have me remember that for 15 straight years, under the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party in this province, we had deficit budgets—15 straight years of deficit budgets.

I remember well that in 1985 the Tories left this province a legacy of a \$2.6-billion deficit on a \$26-billion budget. I was really intrigued to hear the leader of the third party, in our question period earlier today, suggest that one of the things that they felt proud about with the record of Tory management in the province of Ontario was the way in which they had managed medicare, the way in which they had left a well-funded, well-managed health care system to this province.

I seem to remember talking to a couple of ministers of Health who took over that legacy and who found that the legacy of a well-managed medicare plan was billions of dollars of unfunded commitments to hospitals

and billions of dollars of unfunded commitments to new health care programs. That was the Tory legacy. That was the Tory fiscal record. That was a deficit that was fuelled by an average spending—

Interjections.

Mrs McLeod: I seem to have caused some concern for the members of the third party. So let me continue, Mr Speaker, to just set the record straight—

Mr W. Donald Cousens (Markham): You remind the people of the Liberal legacy and just how bad it was, how Bob Nixon was here to pass the torch over to Mr Floyd Laughren this week.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Order, please. All members will have the opportunity.

Mr Cousens: Honestly, Mr Speaker, I wish they'd get it all into perspective.

Mrs McLeod: I was about to put it all in perspective for the honourable member from the third party. He wants to know what the Liberal record was. I'm simply trying to put it all in perspective. I simply want to put a few facts on the table.

I was going to take the members of the House back for the sake of perspective, for the sake of understanding the record of debt and deficit and fiscal management in this province, that that deficit—those 15 years of straight deficit, the \$2.6-billion deficit legacy that the Tories left in this province—was fuelled by an average spending increase in their last five years of 11.9%. That was at least partly in recession times, when you would think good fiscal managers would understand that if you don't have the dollars to pay for the programs, you don't spend the money.

We've recently seen another government that failed to understand that in recession times, when you don't have the dollars to pay for the programs, you cut back on your spending; you don't spend more. But we do have a record of a previous government that hadn't learned that lesson either.

There was a Liberal government record which I am more than happy to address, I say to the Finance minister. I recognize that this was a legacy of a government that had the opportunity to govern in unprecedentedly good economic times in this province: six years of unprecedented economic growth which the people of this province wish we could see again. In those good economic times, when there were dollars to pay for the programs the people of this province needed, the Liberal government kept the spending to 9.9% over its five years, less than the average spending of a Tory government in much more difficult economic times.

I would remind the members of this House of one other fact which is indisputable, and that's that under a Liberal government we saw the first balanced budget in this province in 20 years. I'm prepared to recognize that we could have a great debate—and in fact many of us

continue to have great debates as we talk to people about the records of fiscal responsibility and management in this province—that in good economic times, perhaps the spending should have been even less. Perhaps the tax increases were too great as we reached that balanced budget. I think we can have a debate about that.

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I would also want to have a debate about all of the program needs that we needed to respond to. But, nevertheless, a case can be made about how that balanced budget was reached.

But nothing and nobody can take away the fact that it was the first balanced budget in this province in 20 years. It was the first time in 40 years that that debt was moved down. So I would suggest that we not let our friends in the third party practise some kind of revisionist history in their new-found role as the fiscal conservatives around here.

I found it interesting, too, that the leader of the third party has been making speeches about the Field of Dreams approach of the Tory government in the early 1980s. You may know the movie of the Field of Dreams, Mr Speaker. It was a movie in which the theme was: Build it, and they will come. According to the leader of the third party, that was the Tory hope, that was the Tory approach in the early 1980s.

As I look back on the history of that period, it seems to me that the dream might have turned into a little bit of a nightmare. As I recall, that dream committed the province to Darlington, that dream led to the purchase of Suncor. Now at least there's one good thing about that particular nightmare: It makes the Treasurer's deficit this year look a little bit better, because he is looking for a fire-sale riddance of what became a very bad investment.

That dream that turned into a nightmare left a very badly mismanaged UTDC for a Liberal government to privatize. As it seems to me, if I recall, that dream built at least one highway that led to nowhere and shamelessly went on to name it after a sitting Tory cabinet minister. And the leader of the third party talks about frittering away the opportunities of the 1980s.

But let me come back to that balanced budget which was the reality at the end of the 1989-90 budget year. I don't want in any way to put that in the wrong perspective, the wrong context. That balanced budget was at the end of the 1989-90 budget year.

The New Democratic Party government came in in the midst of the next budget year and we all know that the financial state of this province was changing. I want to set the record straight in one more respect, because twice in the last week the Finance minister, in a rather desperate attempt to defend what is clearly indefensible, has suggested to us that the only response he can make

is that somehow the Liberals in 1990 called an election because they wanted to run away from a bad situation.

There is a great deal that can be said, has been said, and will be said about the folly of that early election call. There have been a lot of accusations made, a lot of attributions made, but never, never, have I heard it suggested that the election was called in order to run away from the situation this province was facing. Even as a perception that this Treasurer is trying to create, that is absolutely incredible.

I would suggest the Treasurer just think about that for a minute. Think about the logic of the suggestion he has twice made this week. I would say to the Treasurer that you don't call an election when you're at 50% in the polls if you think you're going to lose it. I can assure you that we had every intention of returning after September 6, 1990, to deal with what we knew was going to be a very difficult economic situation.

I'm attempting, with as much directness as I can bring to this, to set the record in perspective for this budget debate. I recognize, all of us recognize—and that's why I raised the issue, partly in defence against the Treasurer's absolutely incredible accusation, but also to recognize the reality of what happened in September 1990 when the people of this province, who were clearly angry with us—and every one of us here sitting in this House today knows that the people of Ontario were angry with us for that early election call. They were still not very happy with the Tories, because the voters remembered what the Tory record was in this province. So the people of this province simply turned to a party that had never been tried before.

The government of this province was then turned over to people who came in with a campaign quiver full of irresponsible promises and absolutely no experience in government. At the worst possible time in the history of this province, the Ontario government was put into the hands of a party with an ideological mindset and a totally impractical view of what it wanted to achieve, and for that, with real regret, we take a measure of responsibility.

Be that as it may, in September 1990 we had a government that was all too ready to believe that you could spend your way out of the recession that we were now in the midst of, and it did try. It tried to spend its way out of the recession. It took the spending of this province up to 14.7% in that budget year of 1990-91.

It was interesting to look at the budget yesterday, and I'm sure that all of my colleagues found this very interesting, because if you look at the budget, they have managed to show that 14.7% spending increase for the budget year of 1990-91 as something that happened before the New Democratic Party became the government in the province of Ontario.

But I say to you, that was very clearly a New Demo-

cratic Party financial year. The Liberal budget plan, the budget plan which did project a second balanced budget, a second balanced budget which we would not likely have achieved had we returned to office in September 1990 because the economy was changing—we were in the midst of a difficult economic period. We know that. We have never challenged the Treasurer when he says times have changed and things were tough; they were. But the part of that budget plan on the spending side was to keep the spending to 6.8%. Even when we thought there were going to be better economic times, we were not going to spend 14.7%; we were going to spend 6.8%.

How could this government, this new government, in times that were tough, when the recession was hitting, when we didn't have the dollars to pay for the spending, take that spending up to 14.7%? There is no question about which government owns the 14.7% increase in spending in that first year of a New Democratic Party government.

We know, of course, how they did it. They increased the wage bill for the civil service in this province by 14%, which left us with \$500 million in additional annual costs. They increased the transfer payments to colleges and to universities and to school boards and to hospitals by 8%. Those increases were undoubtedly welcomed, but I'll tell you they were not expected, because everybody knew we were in tough times. The colleges and the universities and the school boards and the hospitals of this province were expecting maybe 2% and maybe not even that, and the very generous, the too generous 8% transfer payments meant \$1.2 billion in extra costs for this budget, and we are still paying for the costs of those transfer payments.

Then they marched ahead with plans to buy out private child care centres with \$26 million more expenditures; they increased the Premier's office and the cabinet office staff; they increased the numbers of parliamentary assistants by 10%; they increased the pay to ministers' staff, all of it when we were by now in the midst of a recession, and the deficit that we had hoped to be able to bring in again at zero soared to \$3 billion by the year-end of 1990-91. But beyond that, it was planned by this government to take that deficit beyond the \$3 billion to \$9.7 billion in the 1991 budget.

Now, we have to recognize that by the time the government brought in its second budget, which was in 1992, the reality had begun to dawn for the Treasurer and for the government, because he saw that the deficit was now heading to \$14 billion. He had already told the transfer agencies, the Premier went on television to tell those transfer agencies, those same colleges and universities and school boards and hospitals and municipalities to whom he had given 8% so generously the year before, "Times are tough, our deficit's getting out of control and we expect you to do your part." They

brought in a budget in 1992 that held the line for the colleges and universities and school boards and municipalities and hospitals of this province, but they still weren't prepared to do their part. They brought in, in 1992, a smoke-and-mirrors budget that absolutely refused to acknowledge how truly bad the financial situation of this province had become.

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You'll remember that we brought in a call for the Provincial Auditor an hour after that budget was presented and asked this government to come clean with its figures, to understand how bad the situation was, to be realistic in understanding what its expenditures were going to be and what its revenues were likely to be. The government of course refused, and it stumbled further into this next disastrous fiscal year.

The deficit that was projected for the end of this past budget year of 1992-93 was to be \$8.9 billion. By November, the Treasurer knew that couldn't be met. His revenues were down. Why, I ask you, did this come as a surprise to the Treasurer? His revenues were down. Why was that a surprise, when the government surely understood that the bottom had fallen out of the Ontario economy and that it was doing even more to drive business out of this province with the labour legislation proposals that were before this House in November 1992?

So the transfer agencies were told: "Gotta do your part again. You're not going to get the 2% after all." And still this government didn't see that it had to get its own house in order if it was really going to deal with the financial realities of this province. So they spent that whole fall session—as the bottom fell out of the economy of this province, as the deficit was soaring from the \$8.9 billion they projected up to \$17 billion—they spent the whole fall session on that labour legislation, labour legislation that they said was going to bring about a new era of cooperation between labour and management, but legislation that in fact polarized labour and management in a way that we have never seen before and which we know has driven business out of this province.

They had just enough time in that fall session for a little bit of work on auto legislation, new car insurance legislation that, if they proceed with it, is likely to make it almost impossible for the auto insurance industry to stay healthy in this province.

They took just enough time in that fall session to totally confuse private sector health care providers with long-term care legislation policies with which on the one hand they said, "No, it's not our policy to drive the private health care providers out of this province," and on the other hand they said, "There is no room for you in meeting the health care needs of the people of this province."

Again, I thought it was interesting that the Finance

minister, in reading his budget presentation yesterday, said they are so committed to long-term care legislation that they are speeding this legislation up. If "speeding up" means that something you were supposed to have implemented in January is now going to come in next August, I find that a little bit difficult to define as being speeding up the legislation.

They did do a couple of other things last fall as the bottom was falling out of the economy of this province. They brought in new advocacy legislation, advocacy legislation that has a \$30-million-a-year annual cost, advocacy legislation that is opposed by all of the people that the advocacy legislation was supposed to help and that sets up a bureaucracy that nobody wants.

We just mustn't forget, as we look back on that fall of 1992 that prepared for this budget, the sheer energy that went into setting up the Interim Waste Authority, the Interim Waste Authority which has already spent \$30 million, which shows no sign of completing its totally futile task, at a cost of millions of dollars as it continues, that spent that \$30 million, as we all recall, taking pictures of farm land in winter and then telling people that nothing was growing there, and that spent some of that \$30 million drilling test holes, only to find they were drilling the test holes on the wrong site. That was what the government of the province was spending its time and energy and money on as the deficit projection soared up to \$17 billion.

By February 1993, the Treasurer was predicting that the budget deficit was going to be \$13.9 billion. It was, I think, maybe a week later, maybe two weeks later, that the Premier of the province said, "The budget deficit is actually going to be \$17 billion." A couple of weeks before, the Treasurer of the province was saying it's going to be \$13.9 billion, then the Premier says it's going to be \$17 billion. That is a record for spending which none of us had even seen in the history of the province before, or it's something.

Still, there was absolutely nothing in February 1993 that was actually being done to deal with the financial reality, except that the Treasurer and the government now spent a great deal of time trying to devise more schemes that would move the debt off the books. I should have checked with our Treasury critic on this, but I think we're now up to seven new capital corporations, or maybe it's eight with the Ontario Financing Authority they set up this week—maybe eight new capital corporations that the government is setting up in order to move the cost, the spending of government off the books to make the deficit look a little bit lower.

The Treasurer also managed to concentrate some energies looking for those one-time-only sources of revenue that would cover the fact that the economy was continuing to collapse.

So we had the Treasurer looking at how he could sell the province's computers, how he can sell government

lands, how he could sell the GO trains, how he could, of course, get rid of that Tory white elephant called Suncor. I do remember, back in the days when we had the opportunity to be in government, that we did try and sell Suncor, so we're not surprised the Treasurer was trying to sell it. We just weren't prepared to accept the loss that the sale was going to bring.

I do think it's important that we clearly understand that in the budget that was presented yesterday there are a great many of these one-time-only revenue deals and that there is going to be a very long-term price to pay to lease back the government lands and to lease back the GO trains and to lease back the computers if the government decides to go ahead and sell them.

I would certainly remind the government that as you try and get the deficit down with one-time-only transactions, you can only sell Suncor once. There is no evidence at all that the government has looked at the cost efficiency of these deals over the long term. They have just been so desperate to make the deficit look smaller and hope that there will be a miracle that will work to save next year's budget and the one the year after that.

Mr Robert V. Callahan (Brampton South): Casinos will do that.

Mrs McLeod: Maybe casinos are the miracle this government is looking for. The legacy that this government is leaving is getting truly frightening, and more and more frightening.

Then we move, finally, to March and April of 1993, when a lightning bolt suddenly hits the Premier and the NDP cabinet. There's a lot of speculation about where the lightning bolt came from.

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): New York.

Mrs McLeod: We wonder. It might have been New York. It might have been the credit rating agencies that said, "You get your deficit under \$10 billion or you're going to drop to a single A and you won't be able to sell your bonds to pay your debts." That might have been the lightning bolt that hit the Premier, or it might have been the meeting he had with Roy Romanow, the Premier of Saskatchewan, who said, "I have to do this," and maybe he gave the Premier of Ontario the courage to do some of the same.

It might have been that W5 program that we know all members of the NDP government have had to watch, the one that told us all very graphically about what happens if the deficit gets out of control.

I suppose it's even possible that they finally sat down and just took a hard, honest look at the numbers. In any event, they did finally discover, in March or April of 1993, that this deficit was not going to go away and it couldn't be hidden and in fact, unless drastic action was taken, it was just going to keep growing far beyond that \$9.9 billion that the Treasurer had once projected it should be.

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In any event, what we saw was that just weeks before the budget was to be presented, this government began to deal with the need to reduce its spending. It was an interesting time again because that's when the Premier said: "Don't worry. We're right on track." That's a little bit like the Treasurer saying, "I was spot on with my budget last year." The Premier said: "We're right on track. This is part of our game plan. You will remember that we had a game plan, and the game plan was that we were going to fight the recession and not the deficit when times were tough."

Well, we've seen they didn't fight the deficit. That was quite clear. They certainly didn't fight the deficit.

Mr Gregory S. Sorbara (York Centre): They didn't fight the recession either.

Mrs McLeod: You're right: They didn't fight the recession either. How can you fight a recession and end up with 575,000 out of work, with record unemployment, with a record number of plant closures, with a record number of businesses going bankrupt? If that's the fight against the recession, heaven help us as they start to fight the deficit now, because that's the next part of the Premier's game plan. He's right on track, because now that they've fought the recession and not the deficit, the economy is getting stronger and they are going to fight the deficit.

The problem with the game plan is that nobody actually feels as though the economy's recovering. There aren't really any signs of it out there on which the Premier can base this game plan. But nevertheless, six weeks to go before the budget, the Premier decided to get his game plan back on some kind of track, and they are now setting out to fight the deficit.

The result has been, again, absolute chaos. Two billion dollars, first of all, in spending cuts, the expenditure control plan announced on a Friday; expenditure control cuts, spending cuts that were made through last-minute decisions. We know that many of those decisions were literally decisions made in the last week. They were made without consultation with any of the people affected by the decisions. They were made with absolutely no assessment of the net cost benefits or, in fact, the net losses of the decisions that were being made. Those cuts were made with absolutely no understanding of the impact of the cuts that were being made. There are \$2 billion in cuts yet to be made, to be achieved in the social contract fiasco. So we had six weeks of chaos that preceded this budget, and I would suggest that the chaos is only beginning.

Again, we do not argue for one moment that this absolutely outrageous deficit, this totally unacceptable debt, has to be brought under control and that this budget had to be a tough one on the deficit and that there had to be a major reduction in the spending that this government has built up.

I think it's true, given the heights to which the government has let the deficit soar, that that \$4 billion that's the target for reducing expenditures in this budget is in fact a minimum target, that the direction of the goal is one we support, that the magnitude of the goal is inescapable, but the means of getting there is proving to be absolutely disastrous because of the lack of foresight and the lack of planning.

We have criticized some of the cuts and we are going to continue to criticize some of the cuts even as we support the need for restraint. We have, for example, been critical of the decision that was made to cancel the relocation of government offices to communities outside of the Toronto area. There was one of the proposals that came from union groups at the social contract talks in which they said the government should have cut even more of the relocation plans, and the response of the government to that particular proposal at the social contract table was to say, "We proceeded with the relocations that made economic sense."

Now, I think that that is a very good defence of the decision to proceed with the relocations of government offices to communities across the province, because that's why the program was started. The program did make economic sense. It made economic sense to government and it made economic sense to the communities that were going to receive the values of those jobs.

I simply want to deal with the government's own response, the response that was made within the last two weeks to the proposal that came from the unions to cancel more of the relocation projects. The response of the government was to say, "The relocation projects make economic sense, and that's why we're proceeding with them."

There is no indication and has never been any indication, any evidence, that the six relocation projects that were cancelled made any less economic sense, and we will question why those relocation projects were cancelled. Furthermore, we think there is a great deal of evidence that they did make economic sense, and I would have to have some reliance—and perhaps this is stretching it a bit—some confidence in the fact that when the government reaffirmed the wisdom of the decisions to go ahead with those relocations, when it confirmed that it thought those decisions made economic sense no more than two months before it decided to cancel the project, the government was basing that on some evidence that in fact these proposals did make sense, that they were good for the communities and that they were good for the province.

One other piece of evidence—or maybe it's lack of evidence to the contrary—was when the projects were cancelled, and because we have been committed to those projects from the very beginning, because we do believe they make sense, because we have continued to

defend the wisdom and the value of those projects even as the government was proceeding with them and was getting criticized in some places for doing so, because we believe in those projects, we naturally asked the government, "Why did you decide, when two months before you were going ahead with them, to cancel them?"

We said, "Since this was done to reduce expenditures, could you just tell us what are the net savings of cancelling the relocations?" and the Chairman of Management Board said, "I don't have those figures." I think that's because the figures don't exist, because there is no evidence that there is any net saving, and that we have simply lost the economic benefit to those communities because of short-sighted, last-minute decisions on the part of a government that was in panic.

We question another cut. There are three cuts that we question: We question the relocation cancellation, we question the cancellation of all of Ontario's international trade offices. Now, this one can be a little bit harder to defend, because it is so easy to cut the things that are out of sight, far away out of sight, out of mind. But it's quite clear, if you ask the treasury itself what the economic benefits are and have been of those international trade offices, that the economic benefits far outweigh the cost of keeping the offices going.

Again we said: "Why did you decide to make this particular cut? Did you do any analysis of the losses as well as the benefits of cutting these offices? Did you look at any alternatives? Did you look at how you could streamline the office operation? Did you look at how you could downsize it? Did you look at any way you could keep the economic benefits even as you tried to reduce the costs of the operation?" And again the answer was, "We didn't think about that."

And there is the third one, because the government constantly says that we have been demanding that it spend more, and we've said: "No, we're not demanding that you spend more. We are demanding that as you reduce the expenditures of this province, you do it in a way that makes economic sense, not just for this budget but for the next budget and the year after that and the year after that."

We questioned one other cut. I do give notice that there will probably be others that we will question over time as we look at the economic sense of the decisions that were made, but we questioned the closure of the agricultural colleges and the research stations that were part of the agricultural colleges, because we've seen figures produced by the ministry that suggest that there are some \$5 million in economic spinoffs from the agricultural college and its research stations and that we lost \$5 million in economic benefit for a \$2-million saving.

We say this does not make economic sense. It may help this year's deficit figure, but it is not going to help

next year and it's not going to help the year after that. This short-sighted decision-making, this panic reaction is still financial mismanagement and it is a recipe for future financial disaster.

We are critical that this government did not take a serious look at its own operations. When they sat down to find \$2 billion in spending cuts, they could only find \$720 million of the \$2 billion in the government's own operations. The rest of it came from those same colleges and universities and school boards and hospitals and municipalities that had been twice before asked to do their part to deal with the funding problems that this government had created.

The members of the government say, "What would you have done? What else would you have considered?" and we have said and we will keep saying, "You should have looked at your Jobs Ontario Training program, the \$1-billion program that gives dollars to employers to hire people in jobs that need no training."

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We have said that this government should put a moratorium on building 20,000 new non-profit housing units that are still planned, that are going to cost millions of dollars over the next years, when 40,000 existing non-profit housing units have not yet been completed, when there is a high vacancy rate in private sector rental housing—the highest rate we've seen in 20 years—and when the Provincial Auditor says there are some very serious questions about the cost-effectiveness of this program.

We've said to revise that 'advocacy legislation that sets up a bureaucracy that nobody wants that will cost \$30 million a year.

We've said to kill, for goodness' sake, the Interim Waste Authority that has already spent \$30 million on an absolutely futile test that is only making everybody involved in it frustrated and angry.

We've said to eliminate the seven ministers without portfolio who cannot answer questions in this House and do not seem to have been given any responsibility.

We've said to do more, to get serious about eliminating waste and duplication. I'll tell you, we've said this over and over again. We've said that when it takes \$35 to send out a cheque, there is a great deal more that this government can do to eliminate waste and duplication in its own operations.

And if we've said that before, we're going to say it much more loudly and much more clearly over the weeks ahead, because after this morning, when average taxpayers in the province of Ontario found how much more they were going to have to pay out of their income in taxes to this government, they are going to be very, very concerned about any expenditure that they see, any spending on the part of this government that they see as being total and absolute waste. We are going

to be hearing their concerns and we are going to continue to raise them.

We believe that this government could do much, much more to deliver the government services in a cost-effective, cost-efficient way, that it could look at a real reorganization of government, not the kind of reorganization where the Premier says, "I have downsized my cabinet," and he ended up with more ministers than he had the day before.

We believe, beyond that even, that this government could be willing to redefine the role of government, that it could ask some truly tough questions about what government does that it should stop doing. I am terribly concerned that instead of doing that, this government may be looking at how much more government can take on to itself.

I would urge this government to be very wary of what the unions are proposing at the social contract table and of the potential trap of the kind of tradeoffs that could be made if this government continues with what is a truly chaotic process of trying to bargain with 9,000 individual collective agreements at one central bargaining table, because one of the proposals that's on the table, one of the tradeoffs that's being talked about, is that government take more unto itself.

As we look at the financial situation of this province and as we look, quite frankly, at the record of efficiency in the way in which government manages its programs, we have to suggest that what we need is likely more privatization of the services that are currently carried out by government and not more work done by government.

I would suggest that there is a guideline that the government could use to look at reorganization, and the guideline is that, unless the job is one that government only can do or that government does best, that government should not be doing the job.

So this budget that has been presented yesterday has a huge gaping hole in that \$2 billion of the spending cuts on which this budget is based are yet to be achieved, and they have to be achieved through social contract talks that simply seem to be going nowhere. We are concerned about the danger of tradeoffs that might bring one-year-only savings but that could be disastrous in the long term.

We believe very strongly that now that this budget is in, now that the government has set its spending guidelines, now that the government has clearly said we must find \$2 billion in the salary compensation packages of the broader public sector and of government itself, that it should stop trying to negotiate with everyone at once, that it should sit down and get on with what it can do, that is, to negotiate with the government's own employees, and that it should let the other employers in the broader public sector sit down with

their employees and do the same thing to meet the financial restraints that have been set out in this budget.

I believe that process can work, and the reason that I believe that process can work is that the people I talk to in the communities of this province understand how absolutely critical it is that we deal with the necessity of restraint. People in fact are demanding that governments today deal with the necessity of restraint and fiscal responsibility, and the people of this province, I am convinced, are willing to do their part.

I don't think this was always so. I don't think that people were always willing to accept a very tough restraint budget. We look at the disastrous financial situation in Saskatchewan—and in fact that situation may have been the lightning bolt that made the Premier of Ontario realize we had to deal with our problems here—but you look at that disastrous financial situation that has developed in Saskatchewan and you say: "How did this happen? How did this kind of financial disaster happen in a province that most of us would agree has been known over the years for its very cost-conscious approach?" In fact this was a province—

Hon Richard Allen (Minister without Portfolio in Economic Development and Trade): Under the NDP government.

Mrs McLeod: Under an NDP government, I quite agree. This was a province where an NDP Premier named Tommy Douglas waited 17 years to introduce medicare because, although he cared passionately about it, he knew that he couldn't afford to pay for it.

What happened to Saskatchewan—and the records, including the record of W5, will show this—was that we had a Tory Premier in the province of Saskatchewan, a Tory Premier who decided that he was going to try and spend his way into a new economy for the province of Saskatchewan, and he invited an NDP former Premier to join him to compete for who could spend more.

In the meantime, it just happens that there was a Liberal leader in the province of Saskatchewan who was saying to the people of Saskatchewan during that election campaign, "Don't auction off our future to the highest bidder." Quite clearly, the people of Saskatchewan and I think in fact the people across the country in province after province would not have been ready for that kind of message at that time, and of course that Liberal leader was the only one to hold his seat in that particular election. They weren't ready for that message and now in fact the province is facing a real financial crisis, and the Saskatchewan people are now ready to say that we can't keep mortgaging and remortgaging our future.

We've just seen a Liberal Premier in Newfoundland win election on a tough restraint program. We are about to see a Liberal leader in the province of Nova Scotia

who is promising to clean up years of Tory mess and we have seen a Liberal Premier in New Brunswick who has just brought in a tough budget and who has won respect and who has won confidence.

Why has the Liberal Premier in New Brunswick won the confidence of the people of New Brunswick? Because even though he has brought in a tough budget, he has also dealt with the other part of the agenda, and the other part of the agenda was the agenda that opens up the province of New Brunswick for business, that brings in new jobs to the province of New Brunswick, that reduces unemployment when it is increasing everywhere else. That is what people are looking for in every province across this country and that is not what this budget gives to the people of Ontario.

This budget is an attempt to be tough on the restraint side—we acknowledge that—at last, but it does absolutely nothing to establish confidence that the future is going to be better. Our greatest concern with the budget that was presented yesterday is that this government still has no understanding at all that financial restraint alone is not going to solve our deficit problem, because we need to get the economy going.

We need to get people back to work. We need to have jobs so that people can get off social assistance and can get back to work, which is what the people of this province want to be able to do. That's what the 575,000 unemployed people of this province want to do, and that's how you get your costs down and that's how you get your revenues up, through real economic growth.

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But the problem is that the Premier of this province believes he's right on track, that their game plan is working. He believes that the economy of this province is recovering. I would say to the Premier of this province that this is still a wish and a prayer and not a reality. I would say to him that he is still refusing to see what the policies of this government have done to the economy of this province and what the policies of this government continue to do to the economy of this province.

I would just read into the record the economic record of the province under this government: The unemployment rate has jumped by 4.3 percentage points to 10.7% in April 1993 from 6.4% in September 1990; the Ontario economy has lost a net total of 133,000 jobs across all sectors; employment has fallen to 4.79 million people in April 1993, down from 4.93 million in September 1990; while some lower-paying service sector jobs grew, the province lost 138,000 manufacturing jobs and 115,000 construction jobs between September 1990 and March 1993; the number of unemployed has jumped by 238,000 to 575,000 in April 1993, an increase of 70% during the record of the NDP term in office.

Perhaps most tragically, the rate of youth unemployment, those young people between the ages of 15 to 24, has increased to 17.5% in April 1993, up from 11.1% in September 1990. The number of unemployed young people has increased by 46,000 to 150,000 in April 1993, an increase of 43%.

The \$2 billion in new taxes that were presented in the budget to the people of Ontario yesterday are not just another nail in the coffin of our economic recovery; it is \$2-billion worth of nails for the economic recovery of this province. Every nail, every one of those \$2-billion worth of nails, in the coffin of our economic future is driving more jobs out of this province, is making our recovery less certain, and this government continues to build walls around this province that will keep business and investment out even as it drives away the business which is now here. Without business and without investment, we will never have the jobs that the unemployed people of this province so desperately need.

We have said and we believe that this government could have met its deficit target, and we support the deficit target. This budget had to come in with a deficit under \$10 billion. But they could have met that deficit target without new taxes if they had looked harder at unnecessary and wasteful programs, if they had looked harder at the programs that aren't working, if they had also taken steps to get our economy back on track and people back to work. They could have dealt with Workers' Compensation Board premiums. They could have indicated that they were clearly ready to get under control the skyrocketing premiums that are making businesses uncompetitive in this province.

They could have indicated that they were going to concentrate their energies on eliminating costly time delays in getting land use permits instead of adding to the bureaucracy by proceeding with the Sewell commission recommendations and charging more for land transactions. They could have removed unnecessary and arbitrary regulations on business, and they could go back to the beginning on their labour legislation. They could restore a balance between labour and management in this province, a balance which is now completely lost and which is saying to people that this province is not a good place in which to do business.

They could even use the Jobs Ontario Capital fund, the one source of economic stimulation that is in this budget, to actually build highways and build subways to support economic growth. They could do it with a sense of long-term economic development rather than frittering away the Jobs Ontario Capital money on unneeded repairs and unnecessary renovations and less important projects.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Like schools and other public services. Come on.

Mrs McLeod: To the member who is saying, "Spend the Jobs Ontario Capital money on schools," I

would ask him to look at how many schools in the province of Ontario have received new roofs when they said they didn't need a new roof at all, and how many libraries and schools have been getting money for new carpets when the carpet didn't need replacing at all. That's the way the Jobs Ontario Capital money has been frittered away.

This government could simply look at the sheer costs of doing business in this province and say that it is determined to take the steps to ensure that business can be competitive, and none of this happened. They could have looked at tax incentives for research and development and instead, while they took away the corporate concentration tax and they took away the tire tax, they added 20 more taxes to make up for it.

You could have provided support for small- and medium-size businesses in this province, support to obtain the financing that they need to create the jobs the people of this province need, because it is in small and medium-size businesses that the jobs of the future are going to be created, and none of this happened in this budget.

Finally, this government could have done something in this budget for the young people of this province, the young people who are looking at unemployment levels of 17%.

Weeks before the government presented its budget, we presented six proposals that we believe would give unemployed young people, young people in our schools and colleges and universities who are concerned that they are not going to have job opportunities when they finish their education—proposals that would have given these young people some encouragement, some hope, some sense that people out there understand how worried they are, that we care about them, that we want to do what we can to help.

So we proposed these six new initiatives and we urged the government to act on them. We didn't keep them as some kind of campaign platform that we were going to unveil a year from now or two years from now. We really wanted the government to take action to help young people now.

We knew the government couldn't spend a lot of money and we know the next government will not be able to spend a lot of money, so we said, "You can do this without new spending." We suggested they redirect just \$38 million from that Jobs Ontario Training fund, which really isn't helping people get the training they need—that they redirect \$38 million from the Jobs Ontario Training fund so they could create more summer jobs for young people, so they could enhance the Futures program to give young people who are chronically underemployed a chance to get a head start, so they could expand cooperative education programs, so young people could get experience in the workplace to get experience on their résumés, so they can compete

for the jobs that are going to develop.

We proposed that they could set up a scholarship for young people to help encourage young people to stay on in school, to make up for the fact that this government continues to make it more and more difficult, more and more costly, for young people to go on with post-secondary education.

We suggested that they could encourage pre-university programs and that they could use just a little bit of money to set up information networks for young people, so they could get the information they need to find work and to find the training and job opportunities that might be out there.

It wouldn't have cost a lot, but it would have signalled that the government of Ontario cared about the young people of this province. Instead of that, this government simply put more money this year into its failed Jobs Ontario Training program and it refused to look at how those dollars could have been used so much more effectively for the training needs of the young people of this province. And all the budget did for the young people of this province was to charge them tax on their auto insurance.

This government could have made economic growth its number one priority. They've said it's their priority, they've said it in every speech from the throne, they've said it in every previous budget, they even said it in this budget. They could have done more than just give lipservice to the importance of economic growth and of job creation.

But they did nothing to help and they must still make economic growth and job creation their number one priority because, if they don't, we will never get the deficit under control. We will not make the deficit projections yet again at the end of next year. We will not see the revenues grow with real economic growth, rather than the one-time-only sale of assets that this government has built into its budget.

If they don't make economic growth the priority, we won't see the jobs created, we won't get people back to work and next year we will be right back where we were before the government presented this budget, and we cannot let that happen, because the people of this province do need, in these difficult times, some confidence, some hope, and this budget doesn't provide it.

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People across this province today are devastated by a budget that has taken their hope away, and we simply cannot give up. So we are going to continue to push this government. We are going to continue to push them to look, to understand what can be done, how much more can be done, in the next weeks and in the next months, so that we never, ever, go through this last-minute chaos and last-minute panic again.

In conclusion, I want to simply draw to the govern-

ment's own attention one statement that the Treasurer made yesterday. He said in his conclusion: "All of us look to a future with secure jobs and decent incomes, where parents can afford to raise their children in good health and in safe homes, where children go to school ready to learn, where our schools prepare our young people for the challenges they will face and where older people can enjoy a secure retirement. That is the future this budget seeks to build."

This is the future that all of us want, but this is not the future that this budget builds. For that reason, I would move that the resolution moved by the Minister of Finance on May 19 "that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government" be amended by deleting the words following the words "that this House" and adding thereto the following:

"Recognizing that the budgetary policy put forward by the Minister of Finance fails to offer any hope for the future of the people of Ontario; and

"That the NDP government's refusal to pursue a fiscally responsible plan for the first two and a half years of its mandate has created a fiscal crisis which has resulted in job losses and hampered the economic recovery in the province; and

"That the NDP government ignored the realities of its fiscal mismanagement for two years, and has only just realized it faces a crisis; and

"That the NDP government has responded to this crisis with a program of chaos management; and

"That the budget's \$2-billion tax grab, the largest in Ontario history, will destroy 50,000 jobs, strangle our fragile economic recovery and further erode consumer and business confidence; and

"That at a time when Ontarians are taxed to their limits, the Minister of Finance has further burdened them with the largest increase in personal income tax since the Progressive Conservative budget of 1981; and

"That the NDP tax changes hurt those Ontarians least able to afford higher taxes; and

"That this budget sends a bad signal to foreign investors, who will shy away from investing in Ontario because of high NDP taxes; and

"That this budget does nothing to stimulate small business, which is the sector that creates jobs; and

"That this budget seriously harms business confidence in Ontario by hiking corporate taxes by \$112 million, including a confidence-eroding corporate minimum tax, which will force more Ontario companies to consider moving to other provinces or south of the border;

"Therefore has lost confidence in this government."

The Acting Speaker: Mrs McLeod moves that the resolution moved by the Minister of Finance—

Mr Sutherland: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker: We have a very important

motion here. It is a confidence motion, and I will read it into the record.

Mrs McLeod moves that the resolution moved by the Minister of Finance on May 19 "that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government" be amended by deleting the words following the words "that this House" and adding thereto the following:

"Recognizing that the budgetary policy put forward by the Minister of Finance fails to offer any hope for the future for the people of Ontario; and

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"That this budget does nothing to stimulate small business, which is the sector that creates jobs; and

"That this budget seriously harms the business confidence in Ontario by hiking corporate taxes by \$112 million, including a confidence-eroding corporate minimum tax, which will force more Ontario companies to consider moving to other provinces or south of the border,

"Therefore has lost confidence in this government."

Further debate?

Mr Cousens: Before I begin to comment on the Ontario budget, I'd like to comment on the speech that has just been delivered by the leader of the Liberal Party, who has a very convenient memory when it comes to revising history for one who talks about revising it earlier—extremely convenient—who when they went to power in 1985 with the support of the New Democrats, Ontario was out-performing the Japanese. Now we see, after the combined leadership of both the Liberals and NDP, where we stand in the world marketplace.

The Liberals have forgotten about their own 33 tax increases they brought in during their reign. They've forgotten how they balanced their budget in 1989: They've forgotten how they received \$888 million from the federal government that surprised them and pumped it up; they in fact had budgeted for a deficit and because of the federal bonus they were able to balance their budget.

You come along and you look at the way they talk about balancing the budget. They did it on the backs of the local taxpayers, because they passed down to local taxpayers horrendous taxes. They did it in spades.

So Liberals, remember it. You're the ones who brought in the employer health tax, court security systems, pay equity. You changed the grant formula to the municipalities. You brought in mandatory changes for social services benefits. You brought in mandatory health programs. You brought in freedom of information, MISA. All of those things add to the provincial budget at the local taxpayer level over \$3 billion. So sure you balanced the budget, but look at the people who have to pay the taxes at the municipal level. They do it at your expense.

Ladies and gentlemen, don't listen to the Liberal promises, the Liberal past. The Liberal past stands on its own. It stands with David Peterson, and we remember him for what he was.

When they say they called the election in 1990, don't forget that they were so cynically opportunistic at what that election would give them. Sure they were high in the polls, and the honourable leader of the Liberals today announces: "Yes, we were high in the polls. Why would we call it?" We know why they would call it: They were opportunistic in the extreme.

But the people of Ontario remembered. The people remembered Patti Starr. They remembered the 33 tax increases. They remembered the 10,000 extra civil servants who were added to the Ontario government payroll: 10,000 civil servants added during the Liberal reign. They remembered all the extra outside consultants hired by the Liberals during their tenure. They remembered the accumulated debt that the Liberals added to what Ontario is all about.

They remembered the fact that here was a government in power that was budgeting a surplus, how amazing it was during the election when Bob Nixon came in and said, "Oh, we're going to have a \$23-million surplus," and after the dollars were counted and the new government took over, it was a \$3-billion deficit.

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So for the Liberals to stand up in this House I think is lunacy. I would like to call it something else, but because of the restraint one has to show in this House, I will withhold some of those defamatory remarks on

what the Liberals have to say. Let it be just said that the Liberals helped get us into the legacy of the problems we have today and we are reaping some of their harvest. I tell you, the Old Testament talked about when there were seven good years. Well, we're into the seven bad years. They didn't leave anything in the coffers to help the new government to try to take over.

Now we get into the new government. They've certainly added to the problems as well. There's an awful lot we can say, but it was probably best said by one of my constituents in Unionville. He said to Mr Laughren, back just a little while ago: "You would like to con Ontarians into believing that the fiscal problems of this province have arisen from too little revenue. That is flat-out nonsense. The real problem is too much spending for far too long." Then he goes on to say, "More taxes are not the answer to this problem."

What we want to talk about today, as much as anything, are the problems created by this government's monetary policy. The monetary policy of the New Democrats is broken into three parts, and it's wrong just to isolate that policy into, purely and simply, the budget that we received yesterday. It also includes the expenditure control plan that the government tabled a few weeks ago, an effort to save some \$2.4 billion from the spending of the province, and also it includes the monetary policy of the social contract costs, which is another \$2 billion. It's referred to in one line in here where it has the brackets, on page 62 or something. We're talking about a government that is bankrupt, but it's bankrupting the province by virtue of what it is doing.

Today our caucus met in an emergency caucus meeting at 12 noon called by our leader, Mr Harris, the member for Nipissing. In that meeting I have not seen the 21 of us who are representing the Conservatives in the province of Ontario in some 21 different ridings as angry or as committed to fighting this government on what it has proposed. Our caucus convened a meeting and we are out to fight this budget with every tool and every ounce of energy that we possibly have.

We are going to the province during the next week and into the future. We have ballots to give people an opportunity to comment on the budget. We have our little van that's starting its trip around the province. It is going to give people an opportunity to consider Mike Harris's position that Ontario needs a 1993 provincial budget with no tax increases and a prosperity plan to create jobs and renew the economy.

Very simply, that says just about everything that our party has been saying since Mike Harris became leader of the party three years ago, that Ontario needs a budget with no tax increases and a prosperity plan to create jobs and renew the economy. Or do people want what Bob Rae has said, that Ontario needs a 1993 provincial budget with a \$2-billion hike in tax and a \$10-billion

deficit? People will have an opportunity to declare their support.

I can just tell you, it is totally unacceptable that we are faced with a situation right now where we are forced to consider a budget that is going to be so punitive to the people of Ontario, a budget that is going to be on the backs of ordinary Ontario citizens. Of the money that comes out of this budget, 98% is going to come out of the wallets of working Ontario citizens and those who are unemployed. Anyone who is in Ontario is going to in some way contribute to this massive tax hike.

Never before in the history of the province of Ontario have we had a tax hike as large as this: \$2 billion. Two years ago, when we reached the \$10-billion deficit level, everybody screamed. Now it's almost becoming something that we can accept. We continue to have a \$10-billion tax deficit, deferred tax of that amount, we have a deficit that would just be perpetuated, but now a \$2-billion tax hike.

Probably as symbolic as anything was the fact that the day before Mr Laughren tabled his ignominious tax bill, sitting in the gallery was the former Treasurer during the Liberal reign, and there, the former member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk, who has now just lost his job as the agent general in London, Ontario—

Mr Sutherland: London, England.

Mr Cousens: —the former Honourable Bob Nixon, who was then Treasurer, was here in much the same way as we saw Gordie Howe watching Wayne Gretzky as old Gretzky was in the process of beating Howe's point average that he had picked up in the National Hockey League. Here was Mr Nixon to pass the torch on from being the biggest taxpayer in the history of the province of Ontario to Floyd Laughren, who suddenly beat his record.

So here we are. Not much to celebrate, but it tells the people of Ontario that what we're faced with now is socialism at its worst. We had it in the guise of the Liberals, who like to camouflage the fact that they were being nice people, but it was easy to be nice when things were so prosperous, when everything was going well, unemployment levels were low and people were getting on with life with a sense of optimism and hope for the future, yet what they did at that time is bring forward programs and initiatives which are now having to be paid for.

The fact is, if you stop and look at it, there is only one taxpayer in the province of Ontario, and that's the person who pays the municipal taxes, the education taxes, the regional taxes and then pays the provincial taxes. All those taxes have to be paid by one individual. Each individual in Ontario who is a citizen of the age that he has to pay taxes or she has to pay taxes is contributing heavily to the maintenance of this govern-

ment and the governments all around us.

I don't think there's any doubt that we're over-governed in this province. We have enough government, I believe, for 130 million people, not just 30 million people in Ontario, enough government for far more people than we've got. Somehow we forget that the person who picks up the payload is that citizen who's out there who ends up having to pick up all these costs. I'm telling you, unless we face up to the horrendous impact that this is having on individuals, we will fail in our jobs as legislators. We have too many taxes, and as we now look at the Ontario budget, there isn't any doubt the impact that these taxes are going to have.

It's wrong when we say the budget is \$1.6 billion. In a full year, this budget, by the Treasurer's own numbers, is over \$2 billion. That's \$2 billion to be collected over a full-year period, for ever and ever, because there isn't anyone in government who ever comes back and rolls back many taxes, though—

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): We've cancelled two taxes.

Mr Cousens: I'll come to that, Ruthie. There are a couple of taxes the Liberals brought in that we took out today. But the fact of the matter is, you've at least increased the amount of tax the province is going to gather by over \$2 billion this year, next year, the year after and in perpetuity.

If you look at the high level of taxes, probably the most heinous of the lot is the effect when you take the personal income taxes of over \$1 billion to be gathered. The tax rate adjustment will net \$840 million; the surtax increase, \$280 million. The retail sales tax—and I'll comment on this further—on insurance, retail sales tax levels all will raise close to another \$1 billion. We have now a corporate minimum tax, so we're seeing taxes, taxes, taxes.

But then we also look at just what these taxes amount to. So the government comes along and adds up all the figures and says, "For 1993-94, in our budget we're going to have a deficit of \$9.2 billion." But go and read the fine print and you'll find there that the government has set up new financing arrangements through its new financing authority where it has moved \$800 million into this new special fund that's going to be administered by a financing authority. The fact of the matter is then the deficit for the province of Ontario this year will at least be \$10 billion, and it could well be more. So don't doubt it.

1700

People don't read the fine print, but one of the best lines on page 19 is, "Note: Totals may not add due to rounding." I'd say the whole publication doesn't add up, not only because of rounding but because of the positions that have been taken by this government.

I don't think there's any doubt that the ordinary

citizen in the province of Ontario realizes that we're now into a debt spiral, and what this government's doing is causing people to lose hope. They see the impact that more taxes have on the economy. It is a terrible analogy when you think of a debt spiral. Where is the incentive going to be for people to contribute more to make this province a prosperous place to be?

After yesterday's budget speech delivered by the Treasurer, the mood in the hall was sombre because people felt that something had happened to them. They couldn't just measure it in the way they might have been able to with a sin tax, because the tax that's going to come out of their payroll now and the tax that's almost hitting their non-discretionary funds is something that they know is going to be big. I'll tell you, it's bigger than anyone could have anticipated. At least our party was on the alert long ago saying, "Mr Laughren, please, for the love of what we're all about, find the money in someplace other than more taxes," but not the case.

The sombre mood will continue, and I certainly understand that as we go into the future, people in Ontario will put their heads down and they'll get on with their jobs and they'll try to survive. But what's happened is that the government has removed incentives for people to try harder, because if they are more successful, that extra amount of energy and effort that gives extra revenue and money for them is going to be taxed all the more than it would have been before.

What this kind of budget does is encourage the underground economy even more. We know how the system of bartering is expanding and how people are breaking the law by virtue of trying to escape the heavy taxes they've got. So it has been compounding itself in recent years, and the budget addresses it in part by saying there will be a two-year prison sentence for people who are caught with a surplus of unmarked cigarettes, but it's going on as people are—

Mr Chris Stockwell (Etobicoke West): It's more than you get for pot.

Mr Cousens: It's just everything that's going on that is an underground economy, where people will do anything they can to miss the GST and the provincial sales tax, where they will find other ways of doing jobs so they do not have to declare them as income. All of this underground economy is impacting the revenue forecast of the province, if you could ever get a handle on that.

But what you've really done is drive people underground, because the taxation levels are so onerous and so heavy they leave little room for some people, in their own minds, except to find devious, illegal means in order to survive. I think that we have to face up to that, that the kind of budgetary process we're going through is now such a discouragement for people, it's causing many to do things they would not otherwise have done.

The government comes in and says, "We're going to make money through our asset sales." That's like selling off your house and still paying your mortgage. You're removing important long-term investments that are part and parcel of our heritage and of the province of Ontario, and here you're selling them off to pay operating expenses. As a philosophy, it just isn't good. You can do that once and then it's done for ever and ever. So again, the New Democrats, while they're in power, are making permanent changes to the history of Ontario by selling off certain assets which will never again be replaced. We're reducing the deficit, and in doing that, we're just financing it for a little bit longer and next year we'll still have to go and pay the piper.

There isn't any doubt that we are paying for Bob Rae's mistakes. The markets all see this government as having spending that is too high. I don't think there's any doubt either that the markets had an impact on the Treasurer and, because of their conversations, forced the Treasurer to reduce the deficit. If you were to reduce the deficit, it would be a way in which we would retain something of a credit rating. Who knows that the credit rating is going to be? It is vulnerable at the present time, certainly because a deficit of \$10 billion is still not something to be just sniffed at. A \$10-billion deficit, when you look at what it's all about, we never had that kind of deficit except two years ago. Now we're getting used to it. It amounts to something like—if we just pay the accumulated deficit, 17 cents in every dollar go into just paying interest costs on money that we've borrowed before. So it becomes one of the largest parts of the budget in the province of Ontario, just paying the interest on what we've made decisions on. The fact is, we should face up to the fact that the deficit is important to fight.

The markets are concerned with the size of the deficit, they're concerned with the amount of spending going on in the province of Ontario, and the bottom line is that Ontario is in trouble fiscally and financially.

I think you just have to look at what this budget is all about. I like the comment by Ruth Getter of the TD Bank, "Ontario must remember that the budget is a political document, not an economic document." It sure is political. It's political on the part of this government, which has not faced up to ways that it could address the deficit other than having a tax increase.

When the government came forward with its expenditure control plan and its social contract a few weeks ago, on behalf of our party I said that it seems like progress, that the government is at least facing up to the deficit and the problems we have with the deficit, so that's one step forward, but if the government brought forward tax increases that would be two steps back.

In seeing this document as it has been presented by the Treasurer yesterday, it's far more than two steps back. It takes us back to a stage where we're now really

on the precipice. How does Ontario look into the future with any sense of confidence that we're going to be able to survive?

I look at some of the data that comes forward. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business was were busy enough to ask the members of the business communities across Ontario, "What is the single most important problem to people in the province of Ontario?" The answer back, by over 90% of the respondents in April 1993, was "The total tax burden." That is the single most important problem to the people of Ontario, the tax burden. So what does our Treasurer do in his budget yesterday? Increase that tax burden.

Ontario is already one of the most highly taxed jurisdictions in the world, if not the highest-taxed jurisdiction in North America. And what does the Treasurer do? Increases our tax burden even further. There is no doubt that the taxes that have been levied by this province have an impact on every Ontarian. One thing it does, it saps our energy, it saps our hope, it takes away our expectation that there is some kind of a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, because by the time we get there they will have fleeced us, they will have robbed us, there will be little left.

There is no infusion of hope through this budget, and there is not going to be much chance of getting the economy going because, again, the budget doesn't do anything for business.

Let me just comment on a number of elements in the budget, the taxes that are going to affect ordinary Ontarians. I find as offensive as any the way in which they have brought in the personal income tax retroactive to the beginning of this year. Come on. How evil can you get? Therefore, as of July 1, people will be paying 6% of the amount. It is going to go to 61% of the personal income tax and the federal tax retroactive to the beginning of the year. How rotten. If there's anything I can't stand it's retroactive decisions made by a government.

Pretty well everything you've done in your expenditure control plan and your social contract, you're trying to roll the clock back. Everything is done that way by this group. And you don't deal with honesty and integrity with people if you're doing it retroactively. They trusted you up until yesterday and then you roll it back. It is totally unacceptable. You can't come along and laugh about something like that.

So it's a retroactive tax to the beginning of this year and, therefore, anyone who's making any kind of money in the province of Ontario will be paying 61% for the remainder of 1993, of the provincial tax. That is going to be another heavy, heavy burden for the people of Ontario.

What a way to take that money away from the marketplace, away from people who can come back and

invest in other things. But that money is now going to be in the coffers of this government.

This government has brought in a tax on insurance. Not your life insurance, not your health insurance, not something that affects your physical wellbeing, but it will affect your home and your car, and just about anything else you buy insurance on you will be paying a premium on top of that for this government. They're going to raise a huge amount of money by taxing insurance.

Some people who can barely afford insurance right now will be having to face up to the fact, "Do I reduce the amount of insurance I've got on my things?" Maybe they'll start risking their whole assets even further and giving up the insurance because they won't be able to afford it at all.

1710

Mr Stockwell: They'll drive without insurance.

Mr Cousens: I don't wish that for anyone.

What this government now says is that those things that we see as important and necessary in order to survive—why jeopardize all your assets for a fire or a car accident or anything else when you can have insurance to cover it? I believe in insurance, I try to keep my own coverage up to date, but I know there are going to be many, many people who, because of this extra onerous charge on insurance, will be forced to give up their insurance, and I see that as something that is very serious.

I see it as an impact on employee group plans, because a person's individual paycheque will now be lower as a result of the increased benefit deductions. Either the company is going to pay for the insurance or the individual is going to pay for the insurance, and I think in this economic time, very few companies will be able to afford to pick up the insurance costs on the premiums that are going to be levied by the province of Ontario.

I find another tax for the average Ontarian. One little group of businesses gets going, the little home brew organizations. They're all around Ontario now and they have come out of nowhere because, number one, it gives people a quality product, it gets them involved in a hobby, in doing something themselves. It's a way of escaping some of the heavy taxes that are levied on wine and beer through the regular outlets. So there they are, entrepreneurs, the market system at work, and what does the province do in response to probably one of the biggest and most powerful lobbies—that's the beer lobby—in the province? They have come in now and will tax beer and wine that is made in produce-your-own establishments, starting at 26 cents a litre, starting on August 1, 1993. I find that just so reprehensible. It's another way in which this government has gone and soured people on trying to do something on their own.

And all the other increases that are going to come along and affect the average Ontarian—it's hard to calculate the impact they will have. If someone's going camping, if someone is using public land for a purpose, the government's going to pick up more money from that, something like \$3.3 million.

You're going to have an extra registration fee for snowmobiles.

You're going to see parking charges. How unbelievable that if you go and park your vehicle somewhere, now you will be having the municipality that collects the parking fees come along and have to collect on top of that a provincial retail sales tax. So here you see a continuing intrusion into the disposable income that people have.

There's going to be a tax on warranty parts and labour. Up till now when you bought a vehicle, you sort of thought you were getting something for nothing, because you pay a heavy cost. We want to see people buy new cars, buy new refrigerators, buy new stoves, and help the economy with that. What this government has now done is say, "Hey, if you have a warranty on it, you are now going to have to pay a tax on that." So when you have those services that cause people to say, "Hey, I want to participate in the renewal of the economy," they're going to be turned off.

Registrar general fees on birth and death certificates: They're going to get another \$1.9 million out of that, if you can ever get the certificates out of Thunder Bay. Ever since this government came to power and moved the registration offices to Thunder Bay, it's more and more difficult to get those registrations. Notwithstanding that, now they're going to charge more for less.

Casino fees for charitable casinos: I have a number in my community, the B'Nai Brith and others, who have had very successful fund-raising events that help our society by virtue of the way they go about it, but now the government's going to raise another \$100,000 out of those special fees that are levied.

Land registration: If you want to go and buy a piece of property, it's going to cost you more. It's another one of those hidden fees where the government has added another \$21.6 million to its coffers just as land registration costs.

Can you believe they continue to dig into our pockets every time you turn around? Every time you make a big decision, the government's going to be there taking more and more cash from you. Can you believe it? This government is greedy in the extreme. They don't stop at trying to take money away from individuals and people who are trying to survive the economy.

I haven't seen anyone as angry as my colleague Ted Arnott, the member for Wellington, about the impact this budget has on the tourist industry. He was going to get a statement on in the House today, but everything

sort of fell apart. Question period was as usual: First of all, we didn't get any answers to the questions we had, but he didn't have a chance to get the point in that this government has now come along and repealed the rebate. If someone is visiting Ontario from out of the province and they've been coming here for years, they've been able to go back and collect that Ontario retail sales tax when they get back home. So those expenses that they would have incurred in the province—we want them to spend while they're here, but now when they come back this summer, they're going to find that when they try to submit the form for a rebate, there will be no rebate.

I think it's going to give them a turn-off signal. They'll say: "Why come back to Ontario? They have taken away some of the inducement on why I wanted to come here. I like the people"—who doesn't like Ontario and its people?—but we want to give people some extra excuse to come and shop here.

What this government has done as well by taking the hospitality deduction is that it has said that anyone who is in business, who up until recently had an 80% write-off on expenses and hospitality, that kind of hospitality where you'd take a customer to lunch or dinner or to the show or theatre or for some form of entertainment—that is a large part of our industry in the province of Ontario, and what the government has done is reduce that from an 80% tax advantage to 50%. Again, it's another excuse for people not to keep spending that money in one of the largest industries. There isn't any doubt that the tourist industry—it's not just by outsiders that do that part of it; it's those of us who come along and have some discretionary income left so that we're in a position to do something for it.

I don't think there's any doubt that we're all going to be spending less money on going out for dinner and for lunch because we're going to have less money in our pockets. It's going to be in Pink Floyd's. And because it's in his pocket, we're not going to be able to go out and spend those extra dollars for a family dinner, a family occasion, which is all so important as far as getting together and doing something as a family is concerned.

This budget has impacts on everybody. The tourism industry is impacted. Small business is hurt. I can't believe that this government—first of all, there is no incentive for small business, no hope for them to come along and clear the cars off their lot. I remember very well the days back in 1982 when Frank Miller was Treasurer. The Liberals are so quick to forget some of the positive things, but he came along and had a tax holiday for anyone who went and bought a vehicle or a large appliance at that time. It was an excuse for people to say, "Hey, I can save the Ontario provincial sales tax by making an acquisition now."

Why not do something like that to infuse some hope

and some encouragement for people in the economy? Not so. What this budget does is systematically find more ways of closing loopholes, closing opportunity and closing hope. What this government has done is tighten up the collection of all its provincial taxes. It's increasing its penalties. It's increasing its liens. It's having a special new way of compounding interest on outstanding payments. This government is really closing in around the necks of those small business people. A person who's running a small business and collecting Ontario provincial sales tax doesn't get paid for that, but here we're going to come along and penalize them even more if they don't do it speedily.

I haven't heard yet from the small municipalities across the province, but there's going to be a tax now on sand, clay, soil and gravel. Isn't it funny? It would seem now the only two elements left to be taxed are really air and fire, because we're taxed on water, we're taxed on everything else, and now this government has come along and closed in on sand, clay, soil and gravel. It's just another way of increasing the cost to taxpayers, because a lot of that is purchased by municipalities and by other levels of government in order to provide services for them. If you don't think it's going to cost more to build roads and repair roads and build homes and everything else that we do with sand, soil and gravel, then you'd better believe that the government's going to raise \$90 million alone just on the application of a provincial sales tax to those items.

Other fees have gone up. These fees have to do with technical standards fees, land registration fees, which I mentioned earlier, annual filing of an Ontario corporation. Last year was the first year you had to pay \$50 when you filed your report as a corporation, and now it's going to be every year, another \$50 every year from every corporation. Again, it seems small. It isn't small. It's a continuing burden on people who are trying to survive, and the government just continues to roll it off as if it isn't a problem.

Maybe it's because New Democrats have never run a business before. Maybe it's because they don't understand the consequences to business. Maybe they don't understand just how hurtful it is for businesses that are barely surviving. They're fighting the struggle of survival, and now the government comes in again with more abusive taxes. That's what they are, they're taxes, and they call them just extra registration fees.

1720

As I look around, and it's been commented on earlier, the royalties on commercially caught fish, again that's just another one of those examples. There's a whole page of all these increases in the budget document. As I look down it, I worry. I worry when I start seeing the effect of the taxes that this government will raise just in royalties on commercial fish royalties, water power royalties, timber royalties and stumpage royalties. In

that whole range there, there's close to \$35 million or \$37 million more. These are industries that are important in producing jobs. They're producing from our natural resources; it's something all Ontario owns and possesses, but the government of Ontario wants to add more to its coffers on it.

There are all kinds of fees and licences that the government is going to charge for. It's included in the budget. It amounts to \$239 million more. If you don't think that doesn't affect every Ontario citizen, young person, working person, single person, elderly person, politician, I don't care who it is—everyone in Ontario is affected by that kind of onerous and heavy load. I don't find it at all easy to handle.

When you look at the taxes that the government levied, at least they had some sense to remove two taxes. It so happens I've only been Finance critic for our party since the House resumed, and I have raised questions on two occasions in the House, one question on the commercial concentration tax and one question on the tire tax. In both these situations, we were saying: "They're stupid. Remove them."

To take some credit for it, I would like today to thank the Treasurer for listening to me and removing both those taxes. I just think that next Monday, or when we get back in the House a week from Monday after our constituency week, I will ask him to do something about the Ontario retail sales tax, because maybe he'll repeal that as well. Wouldn't that be a bonus? That would get a lot of marks for all of us.

But the commercial concentration tax was one of those taxes of the 33 taxes that were levied by the David Peterson government, one of the taxes that's so conveniently forgotten by the Liberals when they were talking today. They brought the tax in, and we have lived with those taxes for the last few years, knowing how serious they are.

I have a letter again today from York Region Real Estate Board commenting on the commercial concentration tax and again calling for the fact that it has been one of the most disastrous taxes to industry since it was brought in. As they say:

"Since the commercial concentration tax was instituted in 1989, the commercial real estate market in the GTA has faced a complete turnaround. No longer do we enjoy low vacancy rates and healthy construction activity. Statistics from the Ontario Real Estate Association indicate that vacancy rates in the GTA for commercial real estate are at 15% to 30% while rental fees are dropping, with little or no new construction in progress or planned."

At least the government has heard us scream long enough to remove the commercial concentration tax and at least it has removed the stupid \$5 tire tax, which wasn't used anyway for much environmental activity.

The government has collected over \$200 million on the \$5 tire tax and with that money has spent maybe \$30 million on a few piddling projects for using tires. We've still been importing shredded tires into Ontario from other jurisdictions. We have not begun to deal with the environmental agenda as it has to do with tires.

This is a budget that hits everybody in the province of Ontario. It has hit business at every level, and it hits everybody. I wanted to find my note that I had on the effect that it has with the new corporate minimum tax, and that is again another example for industry that is going to be hurt by it. I know I have some notes on that and was looking earlier at the corporate minimum tax and the effect that this is going to have on the high-tech community from which I come.

I have a letter from Gerry Meinzer, who is the president of the board of trade for the city of Toronto.

Mr Ted Arnott (Wellington): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I don't believe a quorum is present for this important debate.

The Acting Speaker: Could the Clerk please check to see if there is a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees (Ms Deborah Deller): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum now is present. The honourable member for Markham can continue with his participation in the budget debate.

Mr Cousens: It's part of the arrogance of this government that it doesn't even perform its House duty, that's for sure.

As I was dealing with the whole matter of the commercial—

Interjection: This is a waste of time.

Mr Cousens: The arrogance of the member who just came in and says it's a waste of time—I think it is a waste of time if people don't have a chance to understand what this government's all about. I see it as a very serious challenge on the part of our members and on the part of the people of Ontario to understand this budget. I have the opportunity, as a member of the Legislature, to make my point of view known in the House and I'm doing so, and I do so with great difficulty when in fact you have that kind of intrusion from other members.

I wanted to touch on the corporate minimum tax which is another way in which this government slaps the face of business. They have really done it by virtue of now coming along and having another tax on those businesses.

I would like to quote from the president of the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto. Mr Meinzer notes that the United States is thinking of eliminating its own corporate alternative minimum tax on the ground that it has had perverse effects on investment, has complicated

and distorted business investment decisions and created significant compliance costs for taxpayers. Doing the same in Ontario will have an even worse impact in Ontario because of the particular complexities of the Canadian tax system.

Mr Meinzer also argued that the commercial minimum tax will be a major deterrent—I repeat, it will be a major deterrent—to new foreign investment in Ontario, particularly by high-technology firms that are major beneficiaries of tax incentives which substantially reduce their taxable income. So the taxable incomes of these companies are now going to be hit.

The province thinks it has done itself another favour. What they've really done is drive another nail in the coffin of private enterprise. It begins in a small way. Over time, it will become a much larger tax and, again, becomes a further reason for people to put distance between themselves and the province of Ontario.

It's a nuisance tax. It's a tax which gives a message to business that this government is being run by union leaders. It's being influenced by the Bob Whites of the world and those people—through their discussions with the social contract, they had to throw some sop in there to make them happy with what the government was doing and, therefore, come along and find some way of punishing those people who are in the process of trying to get the market forces going, trying to invest in the province, trying to get jobs going. It's going to take jobs away. It's another example where this budget has a very heinous effect on people.

1730

We talk about the effects of the budget. For every \$40,000 of tax, you lose a job. That is a fact. It's one of those indisputable facts that for every \$40,000 of additional tax, you lose jobs. Therefore with the kind of \$2-billion tax increase that this province faces, you're seeing something in the order of 50,000 jobs lost in the province of Ontario.

If you want to know what impact this budget's going to have, it's going to have an impact on the young people who are looking for opportunities to get in the workforce. It's going to have an impact on middle-aged people who are in the process of trying to find another opportunity to get to work. It's going to have an impact on people who already have jobs, because their job might disappear. It's going to have an impact on people who know that Ontario needs to be working to create wealth in order to invest back into the province. This tax, a \$2-billion tax hike, has the net effect of removing some 50,000 jobs from the future of Ontario.

It is that kind of reaction that we cannot afford at the present time. We're in a position where we want to be going ahead rather than going back. But with this government announcing a \$2-billion tax increase, it has the impact of reducing the number of jobs that will be available for people of all ages who want to work in our

province.

I also look at the impact where the government says, "We want to create jobs through Jobs Ontario." But you know it costs the government \$60,000 for every job it creates. That's the kind of dollars that go into it, and what you're really seeing then is a three for two—three jobs lost for every two created, if you can figure out that kind of mathematics. Why the Treasurer would ever put Ontario into the position where you have that kind of inequity being created, then you begin to wonder about his own sanity.

The deficit is something we have to deal with. We're facing up to it, we've got to understand that, even with the cutbacks that have been announced through the various programs in the province, Ontario continues to post the highest deficit ratio in the country, and yet we still continue to have a huge deficit. We indeed have to face up, and continue to face up, to the fact that we're spending beyond our means. Everybody in the province of Ontario has to find ways of reducing their expectations so that as we go into the future, we are able to live according to our means.

Don't defer the tax to future generations. That's what deficit is. A deficit is a deferred tax so that a generation that follows ends up having to pay for the luxury that we had, and therefore couldn't afford, but that means our young people and those who come after us will be paying that bill. That is something we oppose and oppose strongly.

Some people say, "What would you do if you were in a position to do something about the government budget?" There are a number of things we would do.

The first thing, and I say this on behalf of our leader, Mike Harris—and Mike Harris, by the way, will be closing the speech off on the budget speech in December when we finally get around to voting on it after this session has reached its final stage. That is the tradition that we have within our party and in this House, and so he will commenting on it at that time. But among the things that our party would be doing, if it had the chance, would be to face up to real reductions in the civil service. We all know how the civil service increased by 10,000 more employees during the Liberal regime and how it's increased by several thousands during the NDP regime. Let's bring those numbers down, not just through attrition but there have got to be ways in which we encourage people to take early retirement and other methods so that the numbers of people in the civil service are not allowed to continue at those high levels, because those dollars are very hard and real dollars.

The other thing is to face up to the sink-hole, that sink-hole which is the tax dollars that are going into non-profit housing. Thanks to the members of our caucus in the public accounts committee, we have highlighted a number of the problems with the social

housing policies of this government, inherited from the Liberal government before it.

Non-profit housing, within the next few years, is going to cost over \$1 billion a year. By 1995, the non-profit housing, which is an ineffective way of providing housing to people who need it, is going to be in such a serious situation that we'll be facing horrible, heavy costs for the province of Ontario. It's really a new envelope of spending that the government has faced up to. The government comes along now and says, "We want to do something about housing," and so it's giving all kinds of subsidies for people who are now moving out of existing apartments to go into the provincially run, provincially owned provincial homes. The result then is that we're now in a position where people who have places to rent are seeing them emptied even further as people go in droves to provincial housing units.

The province, even during a time when we have the highest vacancy rates since 1972—did you hear that?—the highest vacancy rates in Ontario since 1972, is going ahead to build another 20,000 units for non-profit housing. There is no way you can balance the books if you're going to come along and take people who are already comfortably settled somewhere and then coax them out of that to go into government housing.

The costs that are going into this are beyond anyone's imagination, and with \$1.2 billion to be spent by 1995, there is only one way you can describe the social non-profit housing program of this government, and that is "irresponsible." It is irresponsible and should be stopped. There is certainly a large dollar that can be saved by this government to face up to the costs of its non-profit housing program. I can assure you that we would see that everybody who needs a home gets a home, but don't do it by spending the money the way this government is doing it. We have a responsibility, we have a social conscience, we want to help people, but don't come along and just throw the money away. We can't afford that luxury, and it just adds to the deficit. It adds to the costs and the bureaucracy and the running of government.

People say, "What would you do?"

(1) We would have real reductions in the civil service.

(2) We would do something about the non-profit housing programs of this province.

(3) We would do something about the mismanagement of the social assistance programs. The examples are legion where there are people who are bilking the Ontario taxpayers because they're not truly eligible for social assistance. A person who lives in the province of Quebec and is claiming social assistance from the province of Ontario—Quebec was smart enough not to pay him, but Ontario continues to pay him social

assistance. Or the kind of situation in Peterborough, well documented, where two young people in university decide that in order to collect social assistance they'd switch homes, so they go next door to each other's and now are able to claim social assistance. What a scam, what a fraud, what a failure of our system not to stop that kind of expenditure.

The cost on that alone are close to \$700 million; \$700 million is estimated to be misspent in the social assistance program in the province of Ontario. We cannot afford to have money spent the wrong way, and that is not the right way to spend money.

There is another saving that we see, and that has to do with the health programs of the province of Ontario. Some people say it's as little as \$20 million—we happen to believe it's close to \$800 million—in health card fraud. What is being done about it? The government has not addressed it at all in this budget. It would be another way if we were able to identify and have a task force to work conscientiously on the whole business of the fraud that's going on in the delivery of health care services. Then we in the province of Ontario wouldn't have that many extra taxes. Let's face up to it: We are spending money in the wrong way in health care. We could do something about it.

Through the social contract costs is another example where we can save over \$1 billion. It came through in the discussions with the unions and their representatives that they could identify well over \$1 billion in savings through improvements in programs in the province of Ontario. There are many ways in which we could address the costs of reducing the costs of running government, which this government is somehow afraid to approach, not willing to approach.

Meanwhile, we're facing the largest tax grab the province has ever seen. The only one that beat it was the Liberals'. Of all these dollars, 98% are going to come from the ordinary Ontario citizen who will end up having to pay more than he ever paid before.

If this government could only face up to the total scene of the province and at the same time say: "Okay, we want to do several things. We want to control costs. We will put on ice some of our social programs that we are now looking at; we will put them on hold temporarily until the economy is stronger." If only we could address the deficit and the financial crisis in the province of Ontario in much the same way as Great Britain did in the Second World War, when people said, "Okay, we're now into a crisis," where there was a unified presentation, a coalition of all people coming together to fight the common enemy of the day. When they did that, there was a sense in which all other priorities were set aside in order to fight the battle at hand.

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If our battle at hand is truly the deficit and we want to wrestle it to the ground, then there are ways in which

we together, as Ontario citizens, in cooperation with municipalities and regional governments, can move towards balancing the books. We cannot just do it in the Ontario Legislature alone. We have to do it in cooperation and in concert with the other partners we have that make up Ontario. We have to do it in such a way that we retain high public hope and expectation of the future, so that the taxpayers who are out there understand they're not being hit this year, so there is no tax increase, they are not being forced to pay out that much again.

If you came along and also worked with the municipalities and regions and instead of arbitrarily rolling back the unconditional grant found some way in which we were able to work with them, it would be more responsible—if we were being responsible to find ways in which we could reduce spending in our own house.

An example of one of the important initiatives this government continues to fight for is the whole issue of pay equity. Pay equity is going to amount to well over \$1 billion by the time it's implemented. I just wonder where the equity is when a spouse comes home and says to her husband, "I have great news, dear; I just got a real pay increase because of pay equity," and his answer back is: "Well, I have some news for you as well, dear. I got my pink slip today." Somehow, there is a message there that is being forgotten by this government. It's one thing to move for pay equity; it's another to see the costs that it has on society and on business and on the unemployment it's creating. If we were getting more value for more work, then there would be ways of doing it, but that doesn't seem to happen in the way the government builds its equation.

So the social agenda of this government continues to go on and the costs continue to escalate. The government continues to have its day care agenda, an agenda where the government is going to socialize services that are presently being delivered by the private sector, systematically closing them down and taking them over and making them part of a government program. What we're seeing is the private sector being driven out by the government by virtue of the way it's infusing money into government-run programs. Just last year, the government gave some \$40 million towards day care. It did not create one additional day care place. It went to help the salaries of people who needed an increase, but what it did was cause more inequity between the private sector and the public sector.

The government has an agenda, ladies and gentlemen. It's an agenda that is focused on its own terms. It has no sense of balance with the rest of the world. It's a government that has closed off discussions with anyone else other than itself. It's really an example of democracy gone sick, because what you have now in Ontario is a one-party government with control of this Legislature. They will win every vote they want to win. There

aren't enough people who have broken away from the New Democratic Party to vote with the opposition to defeat this bill, to defeat this government and to defeat the initiatives that are being proposed by the New Democrats.

We have a challenge in front of us, a challenge that somehow puts in perspective the needs of the whole province. Those taxpayers are now, because of this budget, going to be paying heavily, out of their payroll and out of everything else that's being impacted by the budget: a \$2-billion increase in taxes which will affect Ontario. But this government has its three-pronged approach, and that whole approach is going to continue to impact local taxpayers. The local taxpayers will now have the provincial bill to pay, which will come off their payroll and through the added cost to provincial services, but the second and most important cost that's going to hit them is on their property taxes.

I have no idea how municipalities are going to be able to handle the increase in the costs that the government has sent to them. For some time this afternoon the Minister of Municipal Affairs was here. We have now a copy of the reduction in the 1993 unconditional grants through the government's expenditure control plan, and you see the effect this is going to have on every municipality and region and county in the province of Ontario. The government has treated counties and regions the same as it has municipalities.

If York region were to translate the cost of this expenditure control plan, along with the extra costs of what the social contract is going to cost, it could be a 40%—I repeat, 40%—increase in the local tax rate to people who own property. A 40% increase. I hope in no way that it ever reaches that level, because if there are ways in which certain things can be cut—

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: This is a very important debate—

The Acting Speaker: The honourable member is not in his seat.

Mr Turnbull: We don't appear to have a quorum.

The Acting Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees: A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker: Please call in the members.

The Speaker ordered the bells rung.

The Acting Speaker: A quorum now is present. The honourable member for Markham had the floor and he may resume.

Mr Cousens: The cost to the Ontario taxpayer is such that—

Mr Anthony Perruzza (Downsview): I thought perhaps they weren't going to give me the light for a second there.

On a point of order, Mr Speaker: When quorum calls

are made, I think you have to refer to the fact that there are only three Conservatives and no Liberals in the House this afternoon. They've all gone home for the weekend early. So I think there has to be some tolerance on behalf of my—

The Acting Speaker: That is not a point of order. It doesn't matter. All we need are 20 members in the Legislature. That is a quorum. A quorum can be called at any time. The honourable member for Markham has the floor.

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Mr Cousens: There probably isn't a more important paper before this House than the government's budget. The fact of the matter is, it is the most important thing to our caucus, to my colleagues and to the people of Ontario, and for this government to bring it forward, and will use its majority to push it through, I can only tell you that there is a seething and deep anger on our part. We will do everything we can to fight this government on it, and it's a matter of making sure they know that we're not taking it lightly.

I'm concerned with the impact of the tax. We've got a tax that's going to come through provincial tax; it's a sales tax increase. You've got an income tax increase, but the other tax increase that is going to be absolutely beyond belief—if the local municipalities, that are now in the middle of their term, of their year—they've done their budgets for the year, they have completed the assessment.

We've got municipalities that have struggled to have a zero tax increase in 1993. It was a tremendous effort for many, many municipalities. Some even bragged of having a 5% decrease in the level of taxation: unbelievable efforts by everybody to control the costs, based on the kinds of assurances by the government that they were going to have a 1% increase in unconditional grants two years ago, 2% this past year and 2% again next year. They were working within a framework, and now that framework is suddenly shoved aside so that it makes their own planning processes next to impossible to handle.

At a recent meeting that I attended with the regional municipality of York, I sensed a tremendous problem that they've got because the regional municipality of York, which is funded largely through provincial programs, is really dealing with 20-cent dollars, those dollars which they are able to collect through local taxes administered through the region. Therefore, the large burden of the cost comes from the province. When the province removes the kinds of numbers that we're seeing here just in the first phase of the plan with a 12.9% reduction, which amounts to over \$2.486 million to York region, York region has little way of gaining those costs back except through a special tax bill.

When they come back with that tax bill, it's going to be called the Rae tax bill. There's no way they're just

going to come along—they can't absorb all those costs. They'll try where they can. I've talked with them, I've met with them, they're looking for ways they can do it. It's true with those municipalities, they have established budgets, they've got their staff, everything is in place. How can they do it?

What the province is going to force upon municipalities and regions and counties across the province is another tax hike, another tax increase, and that tax increase is going to affect every person who owns property, every person who rents property, every condominium owner, every person who's paying property taxes, every business that's paying taxes. It's not just property owners. Anyone who is on property in the province of Ontario will be paying a hefty increase because of the rollbacks in unconditional grants and because of the proposals that are part of the social contract.

That is not an acceptable way to run a province. It's not an acceptable way to try to cook the books. What is happening with this approach is that the single taxpayer is now unbelievably burdened. The amount of taxes owing in municipalities across the province has never been higher. People can't afford to pay existing taxes and now, on top of that, on top of the existing property taxes which are already uncollected, the province is going to force municipalities to increase those levels even higher.

So this becomes the tax year, the heaviest tax year in the history of the province. It's the heaviest budget increase in the history of the province, but the impact on the local payer is unforgivable. The money is unavailable.

As I try to feel for a solution, I can only hope and pray that through the meeting that our caucus is starting today—in fact when Mr Harris had our meeting today with our own caucus, we are beginning a trip around the province to meet with people of the province to see their feelings about what they have to say about Bob Rae's budget. Can they afford to pay another \$2 billion in provincial sales taxes? Can they afford to pay additional taxes on their property? Can we continue to accept Bob Rae's philosophy, "Let the middle class pay more"?

Are we going to continue to allow the union bosses to run the province of Ontario? Are we going to continue to accept the kind of unbelievable, unmitigated mistrust of Mr Rae where he says, "Trust me," when you know in fact that if you try to deal with what he's all about, he is in the process of driving us into the ground or driving people underground?

You have to look at what the impact is all about. The impact is something that this government has not measured. They have not given credit to those municipalities or those agencies that have done everything they can to trim their budgets. What this government has

done is just say, "Hey, there are across-the-board decreases."

Those municipalities or those agencies or those parts of the province that have been doing something right are going to be penalized the same as those that have reserve funds or those that have extra money. There aren't many, but the fact is that the province has not taken any special consideration into any of the special needs of special communities.

This province has failed to listen. They have not listened to the opposition, they have not listened to other groups, they have not listened to business, and now we're into the midst of a budget that is far more complex and complicated than anything we've had before us before. In my 12 and a half years as an MPP, I have never before seen the crisis of confidence that we have today in this House.

We have a situation where people are losing their confidence in Ontario. They're losing their confidence in the hope for tomorrow. They're losing their sense of optimism for their children and for the future of Ontario. They have a sense that the government has a stranglehold on them from which they will not recover and that there is no room to breathe, there is no room to move, there is no room to expand, and the moment you do expand, you're going to be taxed even more.

The burden is unbelievably heavy to all of us. Those of us who can will carry our load, but there are many who can barely handle the load that is there now. That is why we are saying no tax increases this year: no tax increases at the provincial level, no tax increases at the municipal level. Let us look instead at everything we can do within the province to reduce spending, to reduce costs, to reduce expectations, to reduce anywhere we can without having one tax increase.

Fight the battle not on the backs of the poor, not on the backs of the rich, not on the back of Ontario; fight the battle within, so that together we find ways of settling up the problems we've got. Reduce our expectations. Put things in control. Allow the province to work together.

There isn't any working together at all between opposition parties and the government. We barely talk. We come in the House and we shout at each other. There is a sense of total separation. The coalition between the Liberals and the NDP broke down long ago, and there is a sense now in which this government, because it has its majority, is not prepared to listen to anybody.

Well, the taxpayers will speak. They're going to speak in a way we haven't heard from them before. They'll not only have a chance to speak to this government when it comes up for re-election in two years from now, but they'll have a chance to speak as they look at the total consequence of a totally messed up fiscal

policy of Floyd Laughren and Bob Rae.

Bob Rae is at fault for what is happening here. He started off his position as Premier and said, "We're going to spend our way out of the recession," and so he did. He spent. There were increases like we've never seen before: increases to salaries, increases to staff. So he spent and he spent. He spent us further into the recession than we ever have been, and suddenly he wakes up because someone from the monetary fund comes to him and says: "Hey, you'd better watch it, Bobby boy, because you're running out of credit rating and you won't be able to borrow money any more. You're already the fourth-biggest loaner in the world as you go to the European market, so you'd better watch it."

So Mr Rae comes back and has a meeting, because it was called by Bob White. Bob White called him and Romanow and—what's the name of the guy in British Columbia?

Interjection: Harcourt.

Mr Cousens: —Harcourt—to a meeting and then they start to begin to say, "Hey, we'd better fight deficits."

This is a government that has lost the confidence of the people. It has lost the confidence of me, it has lost the confidence of the ordinary Ontario citizen, because you've taxed us to death. You're taxing the hope out of us.

This government is wrong in what it's doing, and I will give everything I've got to continue the battle against the New Democrats, their socialist-communist policies. What they're on to is the destruction of Ontario as I know it. They're destroying our hope, they're destroying our possible future, and how we're ever going to repair it. How do you unscramble an egg? I wish I knew, because they've scrambled it in so many ways.

They have done things for labour with Bill 40. They're doing more things now with their pay equity. Put them on ice; put them on hold. Allow this government to take time for pause and reflection so that we can get on with the future with confidence, working together. There are ways it can be done.

Mr Speaker, I see that the clock is close to the hour of 6. I move adjournment of the debate.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you. Before we go to the business statement, I would like on behalf of all members and the legislative officers to thank our very dedicated, hard-working legislative pages who will be leaving us tomorrow to go back to their respective homes across the province of Ontario. We hope your stay with us has been enjoyable, and as the old saying is, "Will ye no' come back to visit us again."

To the scheduling for a week from now.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon Ruth Grier (Minister of Health): Pursuant to standing order 55, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the week of May 31 to June 3.

On Monday, May 31, we will resume the adjourned debate on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

On Tuesday, June 1, we will give committee of the whole House consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

On Wednesday, June 2, we will give second reading consideration to the capital investment plan, Bill 17.

In the morning of Thursday, June 3, during the time reserved for private members' public business, we will consider ballot item number 11, a private member's bill standing in the name of Mr Ramsay, and ballot item number 12, a private member's bill standing in the name of Mr Runciman.

On the afternoon of June 3, we will resume the adjourned second reading debate of Bill 38, the Retail Business Holidays Act amendments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr Noble Villeneuve): Thank you. It now being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday, May 31, at 1:30 pm.

The House adjourned at 1802.

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